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RED, WHITE, AND BLUE;

SKETCHES OF MILITARY LIFE.

VOL. II.



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RED, WHITE, AND BLUE:

SKETCHES OF MILITARY LIFE.

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BY

THE AUTHOR OF "FLEMISH INTERIORS."



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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CHAPTER I.

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SKETCHES

OF

MILITARY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ZOUAVE AND CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.

"Noblesse oblige."

"Quos nulla fatigant
Prœlia, nec victi possunt absistere ferro."
ÆNEID.

"WHAT is a Zouave?" inquires a popular writer of the day, and he then proceeds to answer his own query. The answer is not bad; while it is moreover facetious, and although perhaps not altogether accurate, it gives a very good idea of how to describe what may almost be said to be indescribable. Like the impression of a fairy left on the mind after reading "Midsummer Night's Dream," it gives us a picture of that which can never be painted, for the Zouave is something like the little pig in the negro story, which

frisked about with so much activity that he could not be counted. Here is our author's definition of a Zouave, true, and graphic, and appreciatory, despite its flippancy:—

"He is a fellow wearing a red bag with sleeves to it, for a coat; two red bags without sleeves to them for trousers; another bag embroidered and braided for a vest; with a cap like a red woollen saucepan, and yellow boots like the fourth robber in a stage play; with a moustache like two half-pound paint-brushes, and a sort of sword-gun or gun-sword for a weapon, which looks like the result of a love affair between an amorous broadsword and a lonely musket, indiscreet and tender:—that is a Zouave. A fellow who can 'pull up' a hundred and ten pound dumb-bell; who can climb up an eighty foot rope, hand over hand, with a barrel of flour hanging to his heels; who can do the 'giant swing' on a horizontal bar with a fifty-six tied to each ankle; who can walk up four flights of stairs, holding a heavy man in each hand at arm's length; and who can climb a greased pole feet foremost, carrying a barrel of pork in his teeth—that is a Zouave. A fellow who can jump seventeen feet four inches high without a spring board; who can tie his legs in double bow-knot round his neck without previously softening his shin-bones in a steam bath; who can walk Blondin's tight-rope with his stomach outside of nine brandy cocktails, a suit of chain armour outside his

stomach, and a stiff north-east gale outside of that; who can take a five-shooting revolver in each hand and knock the spots off the ten of diamonds at eighty paces, turning summersaults all the time and firing every shot in the air—that is a Zouave."

We readily admit that all this may be said, and we find nothing to object to in it; but our own idea of the type must be conveyed not only more in detail but more seriously.

The Zouave may be considered an embodiment of the poetry of the French army; he is the impersonation of all her finest military attributes, elevated in the social scale by his traditional moral qualities, his *esprit de corps*, and his sense of the responsibilities it imposes, hence our selection of the brief but expressive legend with which we have headed our chapter. There is, even in these matter-of-fact days, a mystery and a romance still lingering about the Zouave; we feel it in looking at his origin, his character, his habits; and we may pursue it in their development. His aspect is peculiar, his costume eminently picturesque: his features and general type are such that it is difficult to divest oneself of the idea that he must be of Oriental extraction, and yet at the present day the Zouave regiments consist mainly, if not entirely, of "*Enfans de Paris*,"—full-grown *Gamins*, retaining the activity, the audacity, the originality, and even the *espièglerie* of their early years. A living, breathing, spirited tradition of the army of Africa; when

others boast of their ten victories, the Zouaves point with dignity to their twenties and their thirties.

One of our countrymen, witness of the Italian campaign, thus describes Genoa in the occupation of the French. His observations are highly characteristic of this portion of the French army:—

"Maréchal Baraguay d'Hilliers was lodged in the royal palace, while two of his Generals, Bazaine and Foray, occupied the Palaces Doria and Daraggo. In one of them a Chasseur was pacing up and down in the court-yard, the atmosphere perfumed with the balmy odour of orange and citron trees; each time he turned, his sword-bayonet flashed in alarming proximity to the nose of an antique Venus. Zouaves in all impossible postures were coiled and stretched on the marble staircases; a Chasseur d'Afrique and an artilleryman were smoking and playing at dominoes astride an alabaster balustrade; arms were piled against the arabesques and frescoes; a sabre was hanging from the wrist of some classical hero, while the green turban-cloth of a Zouave was airing itself on the branches of an orange-tree. Strange as it may appear to the uninitiated, the golden fruit was untouched, for none understand discipline better than these dauntless Zouaves. In short, throughout the city, everything was seeming disorder and confusion, and yet nothing miscarried; everything was done with an object, and everybody knew what he had to do. The French soldiers, and *à fortiori*, the Zouaves, have

a *modus agendi* which dismays foreigners, and the results are not only marvellous but effective."

The Zouave hesitates at nothing; there is no enterprise he will not venture, no exploit he will not dare, no danger he will not brave, and no difficulty he will not contrive to overcome. And yet it is equally true,—venturesome, aspiring, dauntless and desperate though he be, the Zouave is by no means wanting in the more genial attributes of human nature, and the generosity and nobleness of character which distinguish him are often inspired by strong religious feeling. It is further observable that when a Zouave has faith, he fearlessly avows it.

Perhaps he entertains a truer appreciation than a man of the world of what real cowardice is, and he is above being ashamed of any sentiment which influences him, though it be one at which it is the custom of many to laugh in these days: such, however, as thus presume to judge the thoughts and dispositions of others, and to treat them superciliously, are, for the most part, bullies, and most probably would not venture to make game of a Zouave. Be this as it may, that there is a considerable amount of religion openly practised among this daring and versatile body, is a fact of which we could adduce many proofs.

'We have ourselves witnessed with emotion, on that touching anniversary observed in Catholic countries out of reverence to the departed, groups of

these ferocious and desperate-looking fellows walking silently and sadly among the tombs; and we remember observing one—his eyes filled with tears —with downcast looks and hands clasped in the energy of prayer, kneeling beside the grave of a friend, relative, or perhaps mother, in the face of day, and so absorbed in the noble grief he came there to indulge, as to remain heedless of the gaze of passers-by, and indifferent to any remarks his presence might excite.

Many of our readers have doubtless seen and admired Horace Vernet's striking picture of the "Zouave Trappiste;" but all do not, perhaps, know that that interesting composition is not due to the mere imagination of the painter. The story he has so beautifully told is a true one; but as there are so many details in it which the painter could *not* tell, we offer it, as we received it from the best authority, for their perusal.

The picture recurs to our mind as we saw it the first time, when it riveted our gaze, and, as it were, compelled us to contemplate it.

There is the Trappist wearing the coarse brown habit of a lay brother of that severe order, kneeling beside an open grave, on which his eyes are cast in silent meditation. His countenance wears an expression of sanctity and calm contentment, but we can see that it has not always been thus characterized, and that other strife besides that of arms has waged war

in his breast. His clear, open brow is gashed with an honourable scar, and betrays the nature of the career he once pursued.

The landscape beyond is mantled in the rich glow of the departing sun, as it slowly sinks and disappears like those hopes and aspirations which once carried on their conflict around the hero of the scene.

Thus far the picture; for now he is safe within the peaceful precincts of the holy spot, henceforward the only home he will know on earth: but it was some years before this, that one night a stranger presented himself at the closed gate of a Trappist monastery, and sought to speak with the Superior. He was admitted into the *parloir*, and there stated that he was a Zouave who had just served his time, and had long intended, when the period of his service should arrive, to retire from the ranks into a religious order. The Superior, to whom such a determination was not entirely new, nevertheless inquired what event had wrought so sudden a change of pursuits in one who, since he was a Zouave, he concluded had not become a soldier by compulsion.

"That is true," said the Zouave, "and perhaps a more reckless young fellow never fought under his country's banner; but"—and he paused—"life has its disappointments, I have survived most of those I loved, and am indifferent now to that phantom—glory—which I once pursued with so much ardour. I have been severely wounded; I have spent many

months on a sick-bed, and while I was in the hospital, I enjoyed an advantage which I never knew in the field. I had time for reflection, and am so convinced of the evanescence of all that this world has to give, that I now only desire to pass my life in pursuit of the real and enduring happiness of the next."

All this was sensible, logical, and well-expressed, yet the Superior, though surprised and pleased with his new acquaintance, was apprehensive of acting with too much precipitation; while therefore he answered him with kindness and consideration, he cautioned him against making too hasty a decision, and advised him to suspend his determination for a little while, in order to deliberate maturely on so important a step, adding, that should he continue of the same mind, he would be glad to talk to him again on the subject whenever he liked to return. Meantime he caused inquiry to be made of the officers of the regiment, and learned that the conduct of the soldier had been most satisfactory in all points.

A very few days subsequently, the postulant returned; he was still in the same disposition as to the step he desired to take, and when examined as to his fitness for the life he was about to embrace, answered in a way to show that he was of a stamp of character to endure all the privations and hardships of the order, and to sacrifice inclination to

duty, trusting for strength to continue in this mind, to God alone.

On this understanding the new-comer continued to remain within the monastery undergoing his probation, his whole conduct being a subject for admiration to the community; but the severest test was yet to come.

One day, when all the brotherhood were assembled in the community-room, the postulant was called in and bidden to stand up in the midst: the Superior then addressed them thus:—

"Brethren: we have amongst us a man who desires to become one of our fraternity, and before admitting him, I am desirous of informing you all of the circumstances under which he presents himself. This man was a soldier; but I regret to say he has been found unworthy to belong to the honourable profession of arms."

At these words the poor Zouave, startled and surprised, looked up as if disbelieving what he heard, while his face was suffused with a hue of crimson.

A calm look from the speaker, however, in a moment reminded him where he was; by a powerful effort his impetuous nature was subdued, and he accepted this new humiliation. Henceforth the opinion of the world—even of the narrow world to which he had condemned himself, was to be nought to him. God knew his innocence; what need he care for the opinion of his fellows? He knew if *this*

charge were untrue, he had been guilty of a thousand offences which were *not* recorded, and in his present state of mind, dwelling rather on his faults than his merits, he saw his past career under an aspect totally different from what it appeared to him when in the world.

"Spurned by his comrades," continued the Superior, apparently heedless of his presence, "as a coward, a sluggard, a deceiver and a traitor, he seeks refuge here, to avoid their presence, and as he now repents of his past conduct, he would fain expiate by a life of penance the evil courses of his previous years. It would be well that we should each severally consider his request, and we will meet again after due deliberation to decide whether we are to consent or not to receive him."

While he spoke, the stranger had fallen on his knees, and as he covered his face with his hands, the tears might be seen trickling through his sunburnt fingers.

At the appointed time, the brothers again assembled, and the Zouave was once more in the midst of them. The Superior then breaking silence, said:—

"Brethren—Behold before you a soldier, declared by his chiefs to be the truest, the bravest, the most honourable man of his regiment. He carries on his forehead the scar of a wound received in his country's cause. He has displayed courage in battle, conscientiousness in the performance of his duty, and noble resignation under afflictions with which it has pleased

God to chasten him. He has therefore afforded us, even before his entrance among us, and I need not add, since, an example of edification which I hope will not be lost upon any of us."

The Zouave, kneeling before his new brethren, felt, at these words, even deeper humiliation than before, and would gladly have been out of hearing, but he remained silent and pensive. It is needless to say that he was received into the order, and during four years led a life of great sanctity. One day his wound re-opened, and gradually his health began to give way. Some months after, it became apparent that his recovery was not to be expected, and as his sojourn within this retreat had been a continual preparation for death, he met its approach without regret, and without dismay. He had often looked for it on the battle-field, but with far different feelings, and he blessed God that he had spared him to die here in the possession of knowledge and of hopes which rendered it to him no longer a triumphant end, but a glorious beginning.

This instance is by no means solitary; we could mention many others very similar, for the truth of which we can personally vouch; but this may suffice. We were told a few months ago (when visiting Châlons) by the Curé of Mourmelon, an interesting circumstance relating to these same Zouaves.

"What think you," said he, "of my military parishioners?" for we had just left the little village

church, and had been truly edified at the sight of a large congregation of soldiery which literally crowded the benches.

We could not but express ourselves much gratified at the spectacle we had witnessed; and, deeply interested to know by what means he managed—especially on a week-day evening, and while the theatre, the Tivoli, billiard-tables, and cafés were spreading out their attractions—to draw so large a number of men within the church, we begged him to explain their apparent eagerness to attend.

"I can, and would tell you the history of my success with these excellent fellows, with a great deal of pleasure," replied the venerable Curé; "but although it is a summer night, I must not keep you here *à la belle étoile*, as my recital cannot be contained in a few words. Come with me, therefore, to the *Presbytère*," and he pointed to an unpretending little dwelling hard by, "and accept of my humble hospitality. While we are supping, I will satisfy your inquiries."

So saying, the good man led the way, and we followed him across the churchyard, and through a wicker gate into a little garden, within which stood his modest dwelling. It was a simple little cottage, neat and cheerful, but without any show or pretension, and boasting none of the accessories we are accustomed to associate with our English ideas of a country parsonage; none even of the permitted comforts

with which the family-man so naturally surrounds himself—the elegancies of the boudoir-drawing-room—the legitimate luxuries of the library, the cheerful dining-room, and well-spread board—the pleasant fire-side, with its bright happy faces—and without, the well-appointed stable and smart groom: —all these, and alas! many more of the palliations of life are denied to the poor, hard-working, self-sacrificing parish-priest, who has but one path, one duty, one object before him. Silent, and calm, and solitary is *his* domestic hearth:

> "No children run to lisp their sire's return,
> Or climb his knee the envied kiss to share."

And so was it with the good *Curé de Mourmelon*; in so far as his duty was concerned—*homo unius libri*. Converse with him, and although his mental powers are cultivated, and his reasoning vigorous, his interest is concentrated in one purpose, and his thoughts and words will always come back to that—his work in the camp. It is the mission of his life, and its expected success the mainspring of all his actions. He works for it, struggles for it, lives for it, and, if need be, is ready to die for it.

What he has effected is marvellous, and it is not surprising he should feel himself encouraged to further efforts; but we will let him speak for himself. We had not waited long in the plain barely furnished parlour, whose most attractive feature was its brightly polished oak floor, when the *Curé*, who had returned

to the church to distribute medals and rosaries to the soldiers, re-appeared. The board was soon spread with Homeric simplicity, and the frugal *gouvernante,* almost as antiquated as the ταμιη of Ithaca, having retired, we were left alone, and soon reverted to the subject on which we had entered, in the porch.

Indeed it was not difficult to induce him to talk of his military flock, for it was the one darling object of his life, and after words elicited the nature of the mutual understanding between them and their pastor.

The *Paroisse* was certainly, with him, a secondary consideration, and evidently in this case offered a far less grateful soil to cultivate. Unhappily Mourmelon —the village which stands in the midst of the camp —is one of those parishes which, situated in a district despoiled of its religion by the moral devastation of revolutionary barbarity, has never yet recovered its position or its tone. Church and priest, and religious offices, and spiritual guidance, and even school, were ruthlessly swept away from its confines at the time of the revolution, and until the present *Curé* was appointed its pastor, religion had been wholly banished from among its inhabitants, so that a more ignorant or godless population could scarcely be found anywhere.

The *Presbytère* had been demolished, the churchyard desecrated, the church itself disfigured, and a large unsightly barn built up close to it, which, on one side, concealed all but the spire. It was a venerable

old grey-stone, ivy-grown building, nevertheless, and now that it is restored to its original use, has by the pious ingenuity of the *Curé* been made to hold 1000 worshippers instead of 600, originally the computed number which could be accommodated. And, indeed, were it twice as large, it would now be filled, for it will scarcely be believed with what readiness the soldiers congregate within its walls, with what devotion they pour forth their orisons, and with what eager attention they listen to the addresses of the preacher.

"But tell us, M. le Curé, how all this came about," said we, "for Rome was not built in a day. What are the magic means you have employed to win so many spirited young fellows from occupations one would suppose so much more congenial to their tastes and habits?"

"Indeed," answered the good man, "I must disclaim all merit in the matter; I have but exercised the privileges and duties of my office. When I have addressed them indeed, it has been with earnestness and persuasion, though with simplicity and candour; but these good fellows seem to meet one half way; they understand the language of the heart."

"And how did you open your campaign? How did you get them into the way of coming to you for instruction, and to the services of the church?"

"That I must tell you, for I daresay the recital

will interest you. When I came to this little parish and surveyed the ruined state of my church, and the desolate condition of my parishioners, deprived for nearly a century of any spiritual support, I began to fear I should have hard work to bring back this wandering flock, which seemed to have altogether forgotten that there was a responsibility in life, a God in heaven, or a world to come after this; but I had no idea of the depth of alienation and rebellion at which they had arrived, and of the degree of determination with which all my efforts were to be resisted. Church and school had alike been swept away, and infidelity and ignorance reigned paramount. I had often had a longing to be sent on foreign missions to convert Hindoos, savages, or Chinese. On this spot I found my desire more than fulfilled; no savages could be more indomitable, no wild Indian more intractable, no Chinaman more stubborn; it was only the mercy of God which kept me from despair. I began to think the time was not yet come for the conversion of these people, and that I should be serving my Master better by relinquishing my post and seeking some other field of labour.

"While I was perplexed by these thoughts, and irresolute as to the future, I learned that this spot had been selected for the site of the camp, and that a large body of troops was shortly to be quartered within my parochial jurisdiction. Well, thought I,

I will await patiently the arrival of the soldiers; who knows but that I may be destined to help these good fellows when they come? And I thought of the analogy of our positions—'*Soldat et prêtre*,'—after all it is the same life, the same discipline, the same obedience, the same abnegation, the same life of celibacy and solitude; there must—there will always be a link of sympathy between the soldier and the priest.

"Accordingly, on the first Sunday after the arrival of the army, I placed a notice on the church door to the effect that a service especially intended for the soldiers would be held within the building on Sunday evening at six o'clock; I knew also that this talisman would test the fact as to how many among them were members of the *Œuvre Militaire;* I did not, of course, expect much at first, and repaired to the church at the appointed hour with mingled doubt and hope.

"I opened the door of the sacristy and entered the chancel: you may imagine my surprise and thankfulness when the first sight which met my view was that of fifteen Zouaves kneeling before the altar of the Blessed Virgin.

"They had already been there an hour, and were so wrapped in devotion that they perceived not my entrance. I knelt before the tabernacle to offer my gratitude to God who had influenced the hearts of these soldier-worshippers, and had sent them to console me

for all the disappointment my lay-parishoners had caused me.

"At length they rose from their knees and I proceeded to welcome them, and to express my desire to organize the military *réunions* here, in conformity with the prescriptions of the '*Œuvre*,' to which, I found, to my great satisfaction, they belonged. I told them frankly that I had not been in the habit of addressing soldiers, but that I loved them with all my heart, and would speak to them not only as fellow-Christians, but as fellow-labourers serving one Master, and having many duties, many feelings, many sympathies in common.

"'Both you and we,' said I, 'are soldiers; the priest and the soldier go forth alike in the strength of their courage, and the soundness of their armour; both look forward to victory, trusting in the truth of their chief and the righteousness of their cause; both have abandoned the joys of the domestic hearth; both have said farewell to all they hold dearest on earth; both have made the sacrifice of their life—it is impossible, my friends, but that we should understand each other.'

"My little speech was received with cordial good will, and we were friends in a moment. We recited the rosary, and the night prayers of the association, and we sang the 'cantiques,' with spirit and *entrain*. I could hardly refrain from tears as I heard the manly voices of these dauntless fellows elevated to

Heaven, and pouring forth, with the *naïveté* and pious ardour of children, the praises of the Virgin Mother of God. I then gave them a short discourse, adapted as much as possible to their habits of life, and congenial to their tone of mind, interspersed with military anecdotes and historical associations. I saw I had won their ear, and, I hoped, their hearts; they listened with eager attention, which I was not sorry to observe changed to an expression of disappointment when I ceased speaking.

"Our devotions over, I called them up to the chancel and distributed to them little medals and rosaries, which they received with reverence and satisfaction.

"'Eh bien! mes amis,' said I, after giving them the final benediction, 'à quand? When do we meet again?'

"'Mais! . . . à demain, n'est-ce pas?' replied they eagerly with one voice. 'A demain.'

"'So be it,' replied I, not less delighted than astonished, 'et tâchez de m'amener quelques-uns de vos camarades.'

"'Nous n'y manquerons pas,' was the hearty response, and we parted.

"The next day my Zouaves were again more than punctual to our appointment, for at five o'clock they arrived at the church, and again planted themselves before our Lady's altar, remaining, as before, absorbed in meditation until the hour fixed for the *réunion*.

But when I entered the church I found they had also been faithful to their promise, for besides my fifteen, I had at least fifty others. This, at all events, works well, thought I, and on each subsequent night I had reason to be more and more satisfied; at length I was obliged to have the benches altered, so that the church, which formerly held but 600, can now accommodate 1000; and true it is, that night after night—for we have never once missed—the building is filled to overflowing, and there is always a crowd of men at either door, who cannot find places. If the church were twice as roomy, I believe they would fill it.

"It is really refreshing to instruct and direct them; the difficulty is not to make them come, it is to make them go away. They are never satisfied with one discourse, but after the *salut* they always expect a second address. I was not prepared for this at the outset, and finding that they continued to remain after I had concluded the ordinary devotions, I hinted to them that we had finished.

"'Oh! mais c'est, voyez vous, M. le Curé,' said one of them with diffidence, 'c'est que le P. Milleriot nous disait toujours encore un petit mot pour finir.'

"Le Père Milleriot, I need not tell you, is idolized by the soldiers, and well he may be, for if ever man was gifted with converting grace, it is that excellent priest, at once self-devoted as a man, and eloquent, I might say, fascinating, as a preacher. He has done for

the soldiers what no other on earth has done, or, perhaps, could have done.. There is something winning in his outward aspect, and it is impossible not to be drawn to him by the *bonhomie* of his ascetic and yet cheerful countenance and his venerable form, worn and wasted in his labours for others. He it is who, co-operating with the indefatigable M. Anatole de Segur, the earnest Abbé de Valois, and the zealous M. Germainville, has contrived to bring to perfection the *Œuvre des Soldats,* and to carry it out in all its utility.

"That this Œuvre," continued the excellent Curé, "is one of the most interesting in France, and one most momentous in its results, there can be no doubt. At this moment the army of every European nation is, perhaps, its most important class; but the army of France is not only now, but at all times, more to be considered than any other portion of her population. France may be said to be represented by her army; drawn from all ranks of society, it embodies all the characteristics of the nation. If we can but incorporate the religious element with the sentiments of courage, honour, and glory, which inspire them, we shall have at once an army of Christian heroes, capable of every noble effort, because sustained by a power infinitely above all that this world can produce, and encouraged by hopes of a nature which casts into the shade all the short-lived distinctions which even royalty can bestow.

"Nothing is more common than for a soldier to become a priest, or, as we have already shown, to embrace the rigours of the religious life, and the feeling which actuates him, in individual cases, might be brought, in a greater or less degree, to influence the hearts of the masses. They would not be the less brave on this account; nay, religion would rather tend to invigorate their moral qualities, and their courage would be drawn from higher motives than they had before known. I shall possibly surprise you when I relate to you a fact which you will see by no means contradicts any of the conclusions at which I have arrived during my intercourse with my military flock. Of those fifteen Zouaves who first came to console me when I was desponding about my parish here, and whom if only on that account I should ever have held in affectionate remembrance, twelve have finished their term of service, and have become Trappists.

"Two of these used to take it in turns to come daily and serve my mass, albeit wearing their characteristic and picturesque costume. I can assure you they went through the duty not only with a precision and a promptitude worthy of their military training, but with a seriousness and unction truly edifying to all who beheld them.

"I have known some of these men walk a distance of four miles to make an hour's meditation in the church, and then return the same distance in

order to be in time for the '*appel*' in the morning. I can also affirm, on the authority of officers of whom I have made the inquiry, that there is a far higher tone, and far fewer punishments in regiments where there are the most men belonging to the *Œuvre*."

The poor *Curé* further told us of numbers of bad Catholics and of professing Protestants converted by the good example and also by the persuasions of those already impressed by religious feeling, and practically carrying out their belief. Among others, he spoke of a Colonel whose name he mentioned, who had ultimately succeeded, but not without considerable perseverance, in converting three brother officers who were Protestants; of another, a Captain, who, after affording a most edifying example while in the army, had retired from the service at a time when promotion seemed imminent, to become a Trappist monk.

The father of a young Zouave fighting in Italy, having in anxiety for his fate written to the regiment in which he served, to ask if there were any reasons for his silence, received the following answer:—

"Peschiera, 24th June, 1859.

"MONSIEUR,

"I hasten to reply to your inquiries, and I sit down with a heavy heart and swimming eyes; for I assure you I share your just sorrow. Yes,

Monsieur, your poor—nay, I should say your valiant son,—is no more. He died the death of a soldier, that glorious death which every child of France, and, above all, every Zouave, is proud to meet on the field of victory. Pray let his mother be informed with caution; and if the sympathy of his Captain, of his officers, and his comrades can contribute to soothe your grief and hers, let me add, that your son died beloved by all, and that he had won our affection by his exemplary conduct and manly courage.

"Your devoted servant,

"CASTAN, Capitaine."

This letter is not only a tribute of homage rendered to the devotion of a brave soldier, it is a significant evidence of the feeling of fraternity which, notwithstanding severity of discipline, links together the subordinate and the chief.

The Zouaves are all volunteers, and the conscription levies no men for their ranks. Men already under arms have occasionally been allowed to leave their own regiments and to join the Zouaves. They now amount to upwards of 9,000 men, and are embodied in three regiments, besides which, there are the "*Zouaves de la Garde.*" This regiment was formed in 1855 before Sebastopol, and we have met with a graphic account of the ceremonies which

inaugurated it in a letter of a lieutenant of this corps who was present when the Eagles were transmitted to the keeping of the new divisions.

This officer, addressing his mother, says, "I cannot deny myself the gratification of describing to you an interesting event which has just taken place here.

"To-day, at midday, under a magnificent sky, our regiment was drawn up in order of battle, upon a plateau commanding Sebastopol, awaiting the arrival of the General-in-Chief. The masculine countenances and tanned complexions of our Zouaves, the numerous crosses and medals which glitter upon their breasts, the firmly-twisted turbans, and dazzling arms, heightened the brilliancy of the scene, and gave an aspect of unlooked-for trimness and order to this fine regiment, which could only present the remains of uniforms worn and exhausted by twelve months of campaigning and rough usage.

"General Canrobert, followed by a numerous staff, in the midst of which were Admiral Bruat, General Ulrich, of the Imperial Guard, together with many English and Turkish officers, galloped along the line of troops. A square was then formed, into which entered a mixed body of Grenadiers, Voltigeurs, and Chasseurs de la Garde bearing our colours, and while the Russian guns kept up a running accompaniment under the walls of the citadel, addressed

us in a firm and distinct tone to the following effect. I need scarcely say he was listened to with all the attention which the circumstances were calculated to command.

"'Zouaves de la Garde Impériale! the Emperor has committed to me the double honour of organizing your corps and handing to you your Eagle, which you will defend and honour. . . . . You are the *élite* of our companions in arms, and you will justify the high reputation of your name. Your glorious antecedents are a sure and certain guarantee for your future. We are here to defend the interests of France, to sustain the independence of Europe, and to exalt the honour of our arms. . . . . You will continue to endure, as you already have, the hardships of fatigue and privation which characterize the warrior—in one word, the French army.

"'Zouaves de la Garde! in the name of the Emperor I place your Eagle in your hands; you will be answerable for it to him and to the nation. *Vive l'Empereur!*"

Shouts of enthusiasm arising simultaneously from the four sides of the square responded to the words of the General-in-Chief, after which the troops defiled and returned in order to the camp. It is said that on this occasion many of these hardened, sunburnt, war-worn fellows shed tears on finding they had been passed over when the selection was made to form this new regiment. Each regiment of Zouaves

is divided into three battalions, and each battalion into nine companies.

For bold and daring enterprises, for pluck and courage, for elasticity of spirit and gaiety of disposition, for energy and agility, and, above all, for skill and address in stratagem and in marauding exploits, there are no soldiers in the world like the Zouaves, who form at once the terror of their foes and the admiration of their associates and allies.

"Si la guerre éclate nous *montrerons* nos Zouaves aux Russes," said a French General, who knew all they are capable of, and subsequent events proved that he appreciated them at their just value.

Some have asserted that they are more impatient of restraint and more difficult to control than the rest of the army; but this opinion is theoretical, and by no means practical, and those who entertain it do not take into account that *esprit de corps* which has been called the "*religion du militaire*," and which, if it influences other corps, has a mighty and magical power over the Zouave.

There are many private soldiers among the Zouaves who would not exchange their turban for the *galons* of a *sous-officier* in any other regiment, even if they could jump into the grade without earning their promotion.

"Les Zouaves sont les plus braves soldats du monde," said Marshal St. Arnaud on the day the victory of the Alma was proclaimed; and these

words, which a noble pride kindled in the heart of every Zouave, have never been forgotten. The Zouave has a reputation to maintain, and he will never prove false to his responsibilities.

There exists, and we have just related an instance of it, a stronger feeling of military fraternization between the officers and men of this regiment than is to be found in any other, and, far from proving injurious to discipline, it contributes to maintain it in perfection. The Zouave officer sees in his subordinate rather a participator in his dangers and his glory, than an inferior who is to serve him like a machine, and he takes the same care of him as of another self. His needs are foreseen, and as much as possible provided for, and as far as he is able, the officer spares him those privations which, nevertheless, when they *cannot* be avoided, the Zouave meets so contentedly and philosophically. In countries where it is evident supplies must be scarce, there is no sacrifice the officer will not make to ensure his men against any additional hardship which can be averted; he will advance his money, lend his horses, and diminish the fatigues of his men by every admissible expedient which a kind and considerate prudence can suggest. In return, the soldier adores his chiefs, and is ready to sacrifice his life to serve them. The Zouave soldier loves his officer with an almost filial piety, and however severe the punishments he inflicts, the recipient confides in the justice of his

superior, and will never complain. In battle, no consideration will induce him to forsake him; he watches over him, hovers about him whenever he is in danger, would give his life to protect him, and if he be wounded, will fight to the last drop of his blood rather than leave him in the power of the enemy.

During the Crimean war a desperate engagement took place one dark night beneath the walls of the citadel; the struggle was fearful. Suddenly a Colonel of Zouaves was taken prisoner by the Russians.

"My children!" exclaimed he, "will you abandon your Commander to the enemy as a trophy?"

But these words were not needed; these brave soldiers flew to the rescue; they levelled all before them; they pursued the captors of their Colonel—he was saved: the battle was over, and the men were on their way back to the camp, when a doubt was expressed as to whether the Colonel really was released.

At the bare possibility, the most fatigued seemed suddenly to regain strength, they forgot their exhaustion, and with one consent they wheeled about and returned to their nocturnal combat, when one of the number declared he had himself seen the Colonel, and that he had returned safely to his quarters, so that a new attack would be futile.

"All right!" exclaimed the others; "if the Colonel is safe there is nothing more to be said; but,

remember this, if you have deceived us, and on arriving at the camp, we find your report false, we will have you shot."

During the assault of the Malakoff tower, a handful of Zouaves, who had contrived to escape the ambuscades of the enemy in which they had been entangled, were met by Colonel Cler as they rushed madly past him towards the Russian lines. "Where are you going?" exclaimed he; "did you not hear the retreat sounded?"

"Ah, mon Colonel," exclaimed these brave fellows, "we were going in search of you; we had been assured that you were taken, and we should have recaptured you had it been in the heart of Sebastopol."

At the bivouac, the soldier makes it his business to keep up a blazing fire for his Commander, and will find a fresh faggot when it is wanted, though the place may seem altogether destitute of wood. If he contrive to procure fruit, game, or other delicacies, they are always offered to his officers.

The Colonel of a regiment of Zouaves is the father of a large family, venerated by all his children. And here again we see the result of the *esprit de corps*: there is not a soldier who is not proud of the success of his regiment, and happy to have been able to contribute to the glory and advancement of his Commander. Every order that proceeds from him is obeyed from a sense of duty founded on admiring attachment and

reverence rather than fear and apprehension of punishment; and it is executed with a religious exactitude. "It is the *father* who desires it," say they, and respect his decree with that patriarchal veneration which no doubt influenced the first and indigenous Arabs who formed the original Zouave regiment, and who have by some traditional agency transmitted the principle to their successors.

The Zouave officers taken from other regiments are always selected from among those who appear the most vigorous, whether morally or physically. Full of energy, and carrying the love of their profession to its utmost limit, always ready to face danger and to brave death, they seek glory rather than promotion, and their most earnest desire is to lead their men to victory, and to set them the example of every military virtue.

The first Colonel of Zouaves was General de Lamoricière.

Their uniform, in the first instance an experiment, and subsequently adhered to as peculiarly suited to the climate which suggested it, has, upon trial, been found so practical that various modifications have been made, and are still making, in those of other regiments upon the principle on which it was adopted by the Zouaves themselves. Whether the Zouaves will look with a favourable eye on these assimilations is doubtful, as it is well known they pique themselves on the peculiarity of their uniform,

and are proud of its picturesque aspect, of its singularity and idiosyncrasy, as of their mysterious origin of which it is a perpetual memorial.

Besides the dress, they are fond of retaining the traditional habits, the practices, and even the tone of mind of those from whom they spring; and many of the customs of the East continue to subsist among them. They still class themselves into tribes, in which, in time of active service, each has its peculiar office and function. Thus to one division is committed the charge of the faggots and fuel, to another the drawing of water and cooking of food. On another devolves the preparation of coffee, while a fourth undertakes to pitch the tents, &c.

The Zouaves are not the only light infantry regiments, suggested by oriental tactics, which have been added to the French army. It has received a more recent accession in the "Turcos." These really are native Africans, and are likely to remain undisturbed by any admixture with the natives of other countries. But although their features and complexion at once betray their birth, they are not far removed from the Zouaves in appearance and carriage. Their uniform, too, is very similar, but although they may be found continually emulating them in courage and daring, in activity and endurance, they fall far below them in morals and in discipline. These will no doubt, therefore, always remain a distinct *corps*, though sharing in a similarity of organization and equip-

ment. Of these there are nearly 5000, in battalions of one thousand men each; but it seems probable their numbers will be increased.

The Zouave is led on by aspirations after glory, and by ambitious longings, even beyond his fellows in other regiments; and, doubtless, to his hopes of promotion may be ascribed the gallant deeds and acts of prowess by which his corps are so pre-eminently distinguished. The Zouave has a name which he feels bound to justify; he knows he is looked upon by his officers, by France, and by the world, as a soldier to whom nothing should be impossible; and he would rather die than disappoint the expectation formed of him; his is a *corps d'élite*, and every Zouave considers himself a "death or glory man."

A young private overflowing with the ardour of his calling, frequently excited, during the Crimean campaign, the greatest astonishment and admiration among the allied officers by his surprizing muscular power, agility, and gymnastic skill. He performed with grace and ease the most extraordinary feats of strength and address. An English Colonel asked him one day why—gifted as he was with such marvellous lightness and activity—he had entered the army, when in a circus he could earn twenty times as much.

The Zouave coloured to the temples, and in a tone of dignity, replied—"Because I hope to die a French General, and not a mountebank; the

French soldier does not look upon money as a goal worthy the race of life."

With this he walked away, and never again could he be induced in the presence of an Englishman to give any specimens of his wonderful powers.

Notwithstanding their spirit and enthusiasm, the discipline of the Zouaves is exemplary.

When about to cross the Katcha, the regiment exhibited a remarkable instance of obedience to the commands of their superiors.

The battalions had been placed so as to cover the passage, near a magnificent vineyard loaded with bunches in the tempting perfection of maturity. The Colonel, fearing he should be troubled with the Russian scouts, had given orders to his soldiers to remain in their ranks and not to enter the vineyard. This command was religiously executed, when, all fear of danger being past, the Colonel, to recompense the obedience of his Zouaves, gave five minutes' law to each battalion to go in among the vines and seize what spoil they could in that space of time. Never was a vintage accomplished with greater dexterity.

Many anecdotes are told of the Crimean war, showing the good understanding which existed between the English troops and the Zouaves. After the battle of Inkerman, the boom of the last cannon had scarcely died away, when the Duke of Cambridge appeared among the French soldiers, congratulating them upon their part in the victory, and placing

everything in his camp at the disposal of the Brigade de Monet. He entreated the General to send at once to his quarters and fetch some barrels of rum to distribute to his soldiers, compelled as they were to bivouac without their "*tentes-abri*." "Among our brave allies," says the Zouave officer who relates the circumstance, "it was—who should be first to shake hands with those they called their liberators."

Lord Frederick Paulet, Colonel of the Coldstream Guards, whose tent was near the bivouac of the Zouaves under command of Colonel Cler, said to this officer, as he took his hand — "Come to my tent; last night it was still occupied by three worthy fellows, who now, alas! lie stiff and motionless on the field of honour. I am now left alone. Come and occupy the place these gallant comrades have left vacant in my affections."

* * * * *

"After the engagement," says the same writer, a little further on, "the English showed the Zouaves unmistakeable evidences of sympathy. As he returned to the trenches, Colonel Cler met the *Chef d'état Major* of the second English division, to whom his death had just been announced, and manifested the liveliest joy at finding this was a false report.

"On regaining his tent at about five o'clock in the morning, Colonel Cler, painfully affected by the losses his regiment had sustained, expressed a wish not to be disturbed, but at day-break he was sur-

prised by voices of persons desirous of seeing him, and who would take no denial. These determined visitors proved to be no others than General Lord Rokeby and his officers, who came, as the representatives of the English Guards, to compliment him on the glorious battle of the preceding day, and at the same time to express to him the grief they had experienced on learning the death of many of his comrades—who, of course, were Zouaves.

"Take this weapon," said Lord Rokeby to the Colonel, as he presented him with a revolver, "keep it as a souvenir of our friendship, and, above all, do not fail to wear it whenever you may be called to serve in future contests. One day, perhaps, it may be instrumental in saving your life, which is precious to us, and in preserving to us a friend whom we all love."

It is needless to say that the Colonel was much affected when he thanked the English officers and their General for this mark of generous sympathy and kindly feeling.

Of the dauntless bravery of the Zouaves we need not adduce proofs, their fearless hardihood is well known; the following anecdote will serve to show that if their moral courage is great it is only worthy of their other attributes.

"I was suddenly called," says Père Damas, writing from the Crimea, "to the *ambulance*, where a cargo of wounded soldiers had been deposited.

I entered the ward; the first in this mournful caravan was a Zouave, fearfully mutilated. I fully expected from him a torrent of complaints, for the Zouaves have strong feelings, and it is generally those who are soonest elated who are the most easily depressed. But this was not the case here, and, indeed, I have often been touched at the simplicity and *naïveté* with which our poor fellows accept their misfortunes. They seem to look upon their wounds as a matter of course, and as contingencies, which since they owe them to their disinterested love of their country and their sense of duty, they are bound to bear cheerfully.

"'Well, friend Zouave,' said I, addressing the poor fellow with an assumed smile, 'you've been very unlucky in this affair?'

"'Unlucky! Monsieur l'Aumônier! on the contrary, I have had a wonderful escape. Only think! I was in the trench, a shell crashes in amongst us, which shatters my leg and smashes my shoulder, so that I am let off with only the loss of two limbs, when I might so easily have been killed outright. It isn't often you hear of such a close shave as that!'

"No one would believe, unless they witnessed it," continues the priest, "the imperturbable coolness and unrepining patience with which our men undergo the most terrible operations."

To shift the scene of their exploits, the Commandant

Peyraguay, an old soldier, who had grown hoary in the service, was at Medeah a great favourite over the bivouac fire, where he would relate, with ceaseless flow, a series of military anecdotes, each more stirring than the last, and always dwelt with peculiar zest on the adventures and exploits of the Zouaves, who shared all his sympathies.

"What is there we might not effect by means of our Zouaves?" he would say. "There was not within our territory a tract in which the report of their guns had not been heard; not a bush which had not been a witness of their daring.

"Do you recollect," he continued, on one occasion, "last year as you were returning from Milianah, we crossed each other at Caroubel-el-Ouzeri, at the entrance of the gorge, near the Mitidja? Well, beside that little white-crested mound which we all remember, took place a deed of arms of which we ought to preserve the record. It was there that d'Harcourt was killed, at the head of his company.

"The Capitaine Bosc having relinquished an important position with too great precipitation, Colonel Cavaignac was obliged to send reinforcements thither, to retake possession of it. Starting off at a running pace, the company scaled the hill, and as d'Harcourt was the first who came in sight, he was struck by a ball which fractured his skull.

"The engagement was warm; on one side, the summit of the hill was reached by a path deeply

hollowed by the violence of the rains. Three Zouaves, a *fourrier*, a Sergeant named Razin, and a native Corporal, a Kabyl, took this road. Arrived near the culminating point of the height, the old Sergeant, who had earned a decoration, seeing himself forestalled by the *fourrier*, who was younger and more alert in his movements, 'Hey day! Mr Conscript,' said he, 'are you going to take precedence of me? Make way for your elder, and look sharp about it.'

"'You are right, Sergeant,' replied the *fourrier*, dropping behind, and respectfully making the military salute. They had not advanced three steps, when Razin fell dead; the *fourrier* rushed forward in his turn, but was laid beside his comrade by a ball which struck him as he approached. The Kabyl Corporal ran towards him—'Carry off Razin,' cried he, 'I can manage to escape without assistance:' but as the Corporal raised the corpse on his shoulders, he himself fell to the ground, mortally wounded. The *fourrier* then threw himself on the body of the old Sergeant, snatched off his cross, and although seriously wounded, succeeded, by sliding through the brushwood, in rejoining his battalion, and then placing the cross in the hands of the Commander—'You see, mon Commandant, if I have not brought him back, it is because I am wounded myself; but at all events, I have rescued his cross;' and he showed his right arm, which hung powerless at his side."

An old soldier of the empire—Colonel Illens—

who died on the field of battle not long after I met him, related in 1841 the following account of one of the African campaigns in which he took part, and which we insert as an illustration of the endurance of the French soldier.

"I belonged," said he, "to the expedition which drove out Mohammed-ben-Embarrek, lieutenant of Abd-el-Kader. Our General decided, on the spur of the moment, to retain possession of the small town we occupied, which was delightfully situated, but which was now little more than a heap of ruins. I was left there with 1,200 men. I had not expected this post would be confided to me, and accordingly had not made any dispositions for remaining there. Indeed, there was not much to be done in that way, seeing the nature and amount of provisions there were at command. All the ammunition, arms, tools, and food that could be laid hands on, were hastily packed together, and the army started again immediately on its march. As I watched the receding troops, I saw them, not without a certain misgiving, diminish in the distance, and finally disappear behind the hills which surround Milianah. It was then that I began to feel the full weight of my responsibility; but if, in that glance, I could have foreseen the subsequent fate of my luckless soldiers, I believe I should have lost my senses.

"I minutely examined our abode—I might say our prison; for we were surrounded on all sides, and the army had not advanced four leagues before the

enemy began to fire on us. The resources of the place were soon estimated. The Arabs had destroyed everything they could not carry away; all the houses gave evidence of recent incendiarism; we found three small jars of rancid oil, which we divided between the hospital and the companies who needed a share for the preservation of their arms; beyond this, all we could discover was two sacks containing a few hundred potatoes. As for furniture, the place was completely bare; not a bed, not a mat, not so much as a bowl was to be seen. Had we been abandoned in the midst of the desert, we could not have found ourselves more destitute of the simplest necessaries. Every step we took amongst these melancholy remains revealed some new disaster and threatened some fresh peril. A pestilential odour seemed to rise up from the place. The town was open on all sides to the enemy. Some of the men came to complain, in the name of the rest, that the water was so detestable as to be unfit for drinking, unless its crudity were corrected by an admixture of spirits; a succession of detachments followed, like Job's messengers, with the intelligence that the provisions were damaged, and that the quantity was so insufficient they could not possibly hold out. This latter eventuality, I confess, did not disturb me much; I saw too clearly that fever and death were already busily at work, and would save the majority of us from the gaunt ravages of famine, as well as from other disasters.

"Several of my men were already attacked. I observed them silent, depressed, with downcast eye; and I knew what this meant. I recognized but too readily these symptoms.

"We were in the middle of June. Although Reaumur's thermometer stood at 30°, it was necessary to be incessantly at work to cleanse the town, to repair the walls, to mount guard, to fight and to watch the flocks, our only resource in the way of provender, and on which we knew the Arabs kept a ravenous eye.

"The ruined building which we had converted into a hospital, was overflowing with fever-patients, lying for the most part on the bare ground; those most seriously ill were stretched on mattresses, made up out of some odds and ends of wool collected in the drains, where the Arabs had cast it in their flight, and which we had first washed as well as we could.

"Notwithstanding these severe drawbacks, the health as well as the courage of the men maintained itself pretty fairly till the beginning of July, and we managed tolerably to bear up against the excessive fatigue of these urgent operations.

"But July brought us a temperature of fire; the thermometer rose, in the sun, to 58° of centigrade. The sirocco — that fearful scourge which racks the nerves, stifles the breath, and poisons the blood—blew for a fortnight without intermission. Our prison became an intolerable furnace, of which the very atmosphere seemed poisoned. Disease

broke out with formidable violence; dysentery, typhus, and intermittent fevers, fell upon us simultaneously. None were spared, and as every man suffered more or less, many died. All the officers—save one alone—all the surgeons, all the *employés*, all the non-commissioned officers and soldiers, old and new, acclimatized or not, fell under the scourge. There were moments when I could not have found 150 men fit for active service.

"When the sentries were sent to relieve guard, it was necessary to lend them the support of an arm to lead them to their posts. The poor fellows—reduced to such a state of weakness that the least movement covered their faces with perspiration—felt their limbs give way beneath them. Some of them had scarcely strength to speak, and turning with a beseeching look to their officer, would say in a tone of voice inexpressibly touching when addressed to one who was powerless to help them, 'Mon lieutenant, I *can* go no further, I cannot support myself.' 'Come, come,' he would reply, as cheerfully as he was able, for often he was but little better himself, 'we must each take it in turn to keep watch, for the safety of all. Sit down a while.'

"'Thank you, thank you,' was the ready answer of the poor soldier, gladly availing himself of the permission. His knapsack was then unstrapped for him, and he would seat himself upon it; his gun remained between his knees, and as he leaned back

with gaping mouth and exhausted mien, his eyes would remain open, contemplating the hot sky above him, with that vacant gaze which already seems to have lost its 'speculation.'

"His comrades left him with a heavy heart. Soon after, in comes the Sergeant, and, with that hollow voice which was more or less the characteristic of all, would say, 'Mon Lieutenant, we want a man.' 'But there are no more.' Poor *such a one* must remain at his post another hour. *So and so* has mounted guard for the last time. Often a dying man was led to the post to replace one already dead!

"Excellent fellows!" exclaimed the old Colonel, and as he told his tale, the tears were in his eyes; "never did I have to punish one of them for an act of insubordination. But I could not command them to live. Some became insane. Those who, besides the effects of the climate, were attacked by that terrible malady, nostalgia; those who were still young and tender-hearted, and whose thoughts continually reverted to the village home they had left —the crackling hearth, the moss-thatched cottage, their aged mother, and affianced bride—were struck down the first, and rarely if ever rallied.

"Next to these came those addicted to smoking, for the total privation of this their accustomed practice proved the most cruel of trials. Finding how disastrous the effects of this forced change of habits had become, an ingenious substitute was suggested

by the Colonel, compounded of the leaves of the vine, and of another plant indigenous to the soil, which formed a very fair imitation, and which they received as a gift from heaven. Unhappily the invention came too late.

"Each day there was some new peril to struggle against, some new want to be satisfied, or, when that was not possible, to be deluded. In order to keep up the spirits of the men, games and songs were introduced among them, and two evenings in the week were devoted to a concert of 'amateur' *artistes*, who treated their comrades to the catches and melodies of their 'pays.' On these occasions some of the audience would laugh, others would weep, and the singers were generally listened to at best with melancholy pleasure. When it was over, many, in whose hearts fond recollections had been thus revived, regretted more bitterly than before, their far-off homes. I began," continued the Colonel, "to ask myself whether this mode of entertainment, intended to divert their attention from their unhappy position, and which became shortly so popular that the performances were looked for with great impatience, was altogether very politic. I hesitated whether I should allow it to proceed, and yet did not like to deprive them of what seemed to be enjoyment. Whilst I was deliberating, the question decided itself. 'Unceremonious' death came in—'no warning given'—and closed, at the same time, the lips of the singers and the ears of the audience.

"So grievous were the disasters by which we were menaced, that the idea of famine never presented itself to my imagination, but now *that* scourge began in its turn to threaten us. Even the unwholesome and almost nauseous bread which we managed to make out of damaged flour, seemed likely to run short, for the bakers were failing us. They were not spared any more than the rest. As our singers and actors had been removed, so had our gardeners been cut off, without even seeing the result of their own plantings; and now the bakers were dying, or dead. Companies began to find themselves without officers, the hospital without doctors, the wards without nurses; and yet the strong and the weak alike crowded into this refuge whence the dead were continually being carried out.

"The Arabs suspected our distress, and were not slow to take advantage of it; they attacked us without quarter: their balls came to cut up those whom disease had spared. Men perishing from fever envied the lot of those dying of their wounds, and while chained to their bed of suffering their whole interest was concentrated in hearing how their comrades kept the Bedouins in awe.

"One day a brave fellow, a carbinier, named Georgi, threw himself alone and unattended into the midst of thirty Kabyls, who were attacking our advanced posts; unaided he wounded several of them with his bayonet, and put the rest to flight, forcing them to

abandon their wounded. This feat made a great sensation in the garrison and caused much excitement in the hospital, indeed Georgi's prowess did more than all the medicine. To have pursued the enemy, we should have required more legs than remained to us. It was as much as we could do to avoid being absolutely blockaded within our walls. At the end of three months, towards the close of September, it became very difficult to re-provision the advanced posts. Officers, surgeons, officials—everyone—took up arms. I was obliged to do the same, and to go out and encounter the enemy, followed by half a hundred men, the majority of whom were scarcely convalescent.

"Everything seemed against us. The very fruits, as they hung upon the trees, were dangerous for food, and sometimes proved absolute poison. The approach of autumn even did not temper the fiery heat which was parching us. The mortality which was decimating our ranks continued to increase. I observed that the Arabs, desirous of ascertaining our probable loss, came at night to count the graves, with which the walls of the city were surrounded, for we had to dig new graves every day. I gave orders that they should be made deeper, so that each should receive several corpses. The men obeyed; but their exhausted strength would not allow of their executing my wish to its full extent. One morning, those whose turn it was to fulfil this lugúbrious office, came to me in a state of terror, to

announce that the dead were rising out of the ground! And indeed it was too true: this inhospitable soil refused to keep its deposit. The intense heat had acted with fearful effect upon the bodies of our deceased comrades, and their festering remains were appearing again above the surface. The ghastly effect of this sight upon minds already morbid, was in many instances fatal: severely indisposed myself, and scarcely able to walk, I repaired to the uninviting spot, to preside over the operations, and to take measures for burying our dead a second time; in order that my directions might be better carried out, I subsequently followed all funerals to the grave, and each day they seemed to increase in number. In vain I tried to arm myself with renewed courage, I could not get used to it. I had attached myself to these excellent fellows, so unfortunate, and yet so brave and resigned; no children could have loved their father better, and no father could mourn over his children more sincerely. I never could succeed in reconciling myself to this affliction whilst it lasted, and never will time obliterate its remembrance from my mind; in short—must I say the words?—when on the 4th of October orders came to relieve us, I had buried upwards of eight hundred of my men! : . . . The rest, who were still able to be removed, were already attacked, and that fatal road remains to this day a witness of the sad result, for it is strewn with their graves. Relief had come too late! Neither the skill of the surgeons, nor joy at regaining their freedom, was able to restore

them; those who managed to live long enough, to reach the hospitals of Bliva or Algiers, sunk, almost to a man, victims of an incurable malady. On leaving Mjlianah there were not a hundred in a condition to bear a few hours' march;—not one who could bear the weight of his firelock and knapsack. When, a few months later, I quitted Algeria to return and settle in France, there were not, to my certain knowledge, twenty of those poor fellows still living. Who knows if even those few are alive now! I was one of the least severely affected, and yet I feel it to this day.

"Nevertheless, despite all these drawbacks and disadvantages, we never suspended our labour; we put the place into a state of defence; we established a fine hospital, and I may safely say that up to the last moment each one continued to do his duty. The enemy never ceased to fear and to respect us. Our discipline was perfect to the end—union, concord, devotedness, harmony reigned amongst us, and characterised all the actions of those brave men who died, as they had lived, martyrs to the call of duty. In the midst of our fatigues, our privations, our unnumbered trials, there were but five-and-twenty deserters, *and these all of the foreign legion, not one Frenchman.*

"Neither was justice ever done us. Our martyrdom would have told against a system which was just then in particular favour, and it would have spoken too loudly against the negligence of those

who commanded such an occupation of the place. The official reports of the day kept silence on the matter, and confined themselves to the statement that 'La garnison de Milianah—éprouvée par le climat—avait été relevée.' Tried by the climate! Well, indeed! might they have said that!

"How often, in these rough, uncivilized regions, has it fallen to the lot of the French soldier to be all to himself and to others; and how nobly, and at the same time how efficiently, has he fulfilled the most varied and perplexing tasks! If the school of adversity—of trial, of hardship—is that where soldiers are tutored into their profession, let them try an African campaign. One thing is certain, the campaign will try *them*.

"Sometimes, while the Chasseurs were busy manufacturing their shot by an ingenious process of their own contrivance, the Zouaves would be employed in repairing their uniforms.

"By order of the Colonel, the administration provided them with sacks, and out of this coarse cloth, and a supply of buff-leather, each soldier had soon turned out a pair of new stout gaiters. A Zouave, who had formerly exercised the craft of button-maker, directed the proceedings. As for thread, that was soon obtained from tow found in the stables; and when once at business, nothing could be more original than the aspect of the *atelier*, where these scarred old Zouaves, with their long mustachios,

bushy beards, and bronzed complexions, were working away as busily, and almost as handily, as if they had been women. They were, nevertheless, a valiant troop, and none the less brave in danger, or with less endurance under fatigue, because so apt at expedients under embarrassing circumstances. Well commanded, the Zouaves will always be equal to their position.

The Zouaves may be said to have passed through a fiery baptism at the gorge of Mouzaïa, which they were destined to irrigate with their blood, and to illustrate by their valour. The two months they passed at Medeah, where General Clausel found it necessary to leave a small mixed troop of French and natives, was also a severe trial, and an admirable test of their endurance and energy. It is scarcely possible to imagine the amount of courage, of industry, of resignation, needed by the first detachments left in the camps and interior settlements of Algeria, compelled to be continually before the enemy—watching and fighting day and night—only laying down the gun to take up the pickaxe—forced to contrive everything for themselves—reduced to unheard-of expedients in order to live—cut off from all communication with those dear to them, and deprived of consolation of every kind. It was a hard struggle, but the Zouaves came out of it valiantly. One of their Captains was killed near the Bey's farm, and was the first of a long and glorious list, among whom figure the names of some of the old *noblesse* of France,

a Duc d'Harcourt, a Paragûez, and a Bessières, whose noble character and engaging qualities were so well appreciated by the army, that he was beloved as a father. In his former regiment—the 17th Light Infantry—his courage had passed into a proverb, and to designate a hero, the men would expressively say, "*Brave comme Bessières.*"

When the Zouave troops were encamped in the environs of Algiers, the station of Dely-Ibrahim had been assigned to them, and here they exhibited the versatility of their genius and their aptitude to undertake any task that might present itself. Unaided by any of the craftsmen peculiar to the employment, they called into existence all the establishments and constructions they needed; and whether as masons, blacksmiths, bricklayers, builders, or architects, they fulfilled the peculiar duties of each function with a readiness and a skill which satisfied all the exigencies of the emergency; and when they were not at their labour, they were at drill, perfecting themselves in military knowledge and experience.

"As the Emperor rode past the glittering front of this victorious regiment on their return to the capital," writes Paul de Molénes, "I examined each soldier one after the other, and could not help speculating upon the prestige which constitutes the glory of this, the cream of our rising army. The Zouaves are animated by one spirit; but their regiments comprise a vast variety of types. Next to the vigorous, firmly-built, long-bearded soldier—near the

man of bronzed countenance—for there is a metallic appearance in the faces of these heroes whom fatigue and hardship have never succeeded in subduing—in a word, beside the old, hardened, determined, indomitable Zouave, might be remarked a young man of pale complexion, delicate features, and almost sickly expression. He too, however, is a Zouave, and despite his fragile appearance, there is no fear of his visiting the hospital. Look at his eyes, they sparkle with that moral ardour which compensates even for want of physical energy. He is noted for his wit and vivacity. He goes by the name of the '*Parisien*,' and no matter where he was born, there can be no doubt Paris nursed and educated him. He is excitable, impressionable, satirical; but do not suppose on that account that he is a sceptic. No; O ye who rule nations! to you I would say in the words of Bossuet: '*Instruisez vous en étudiant cet homme.*' You may learn thence to dissipate many errors, and to reform many opinions.

"Notwithstanding their '*verve*'—or what we might call *pluck* — their mischief, and reckless gaiety, their features conceal something sombre and passionate, which might be called fanaticism, and, indeed, why should we not allow it to be fanaticism, for that burning enthusiasm which a French soldier cherishes now, as in the days of the *Ligue*, is always capable of being exercised in a noble cause.

"I knew one such, for he used to come to my

tent every day to shave me. He was a living Figaro, and even when the snow was on the ground, and times were at the hardest, his smile beamed like the music of Rossini. I used to chat with him, for he amused me. He always brought news from the trenches, and his great delight was to retail all the gossip and the jokes of the poor fellows detained there. He was the walking newspaper of the siege. One day I was speaking to him of Paris, and wondering if we should ever meet there.

" 'I don't much expect it,' said my barber, as he wiped his razor; 'but whether I leave an arm or a leg, or my whole carcase here, I care not, so that the place be ours.' "

This will explain something of that spirit which constitutes the success of the Zouaves. Let it not be supposed that the Zouaves are an exception to the military family; they are, on the contrary, the complete and living expression of our army: that is their glory: I will go further, they are the expression of the entire nation: that is the true secret of their strength.

" We hear of nothing but the Zouaves, and all that they say and do," said an English speaker in Parliament, " till, upon my word, one does not know what to make of them."

Any Frenchman might have replied, in answer to this observation, " The Zouave is like the vine, a secret of the old Gallic soil;—a secret which has

long puzzled the world—but no one has as yet been able to take it from us."

* * * * *

A scene witnessed—among many others not easily forgotten—in the Grande Rue of Palestro, is characteristic of the cool and imperturbable courage of the Zouave.

"A procession was seen advancing up the street; it was the 'cortége' of the Emperor, who had come personally to inspect the state of affairs. The pavement was obstructed by litters, on which a countless array of wounded was borne past; some, mute and motionless, others writhing under injuries received, while some shuddered as they looked on their own mutilated limbs and shattered forms. Now and then a groan would almost unwittingly escape the lips of a dying soldier, or a cry be wrung from the breast of one overcome by almost superhuman suffering. But oftener still, were heard masculine and energetic ejaculations, the expression of a tenacity of life, proceeding from an intrepid and excitable temperament, of one as much attached to the tatters of his mutilated frame, as the besieged inhabitant to the walls of his battered citadel.

"'Come, Doctor, look sharp, and disencumber me of *that!*' were words pronounced behind me in an accent of resolute determination, which made me turn round quickly. If the tone of voice impressed me, the countenance of the speaker was in character

with it. He had not even quitted his mule, and he stood before the door of the *Ambulance*, the blood trickling down the side of his beast and reddening the pavement. He was a tough old Zouave, with shaven forehead, and bearded chin. The object of which he desired to be rid, and which he simply designated as '*that*,' was the remains of an arm, broken, disfigured, lifeless, and only hanging to the shoulder by a few bleeding shreds. And yet, deplorable as was the spectacle, I could almost say it gave me pleasure, for the triumph of man over suffering will always be one of the noblest sights this world can afford."

This description of victory has been celebrated by many eloquent writers, and its fame has illustrated the deaths of many historical personages with pompous *éclat;* but few perhaps have better deserved such laudations than this obscure stoic, to whom no vain-glorious aspirations suggested the policy of exhibiting an evidence of courage as simple as it was grand.

* * * * *

"What can I do for you, my child?" said Père Damas to a young Zouave who lay extended on the ground just after the first assault on the Malakoff tower.

"Mon Père," answered the wounded youth, "you have reconciled me with God; I have only one more favour to ask of you. Will you take my purse out of my pocket; you will find in it a little note which expresses my last wishes."

The Aumônier complied with the request of the dying lad, and read with emotion the following words:—

"17th June, 1855.—To-morrow I am going into the fight. If I should fall on the battle-field, may God have mercy on my soul! I leave ten francs; of these I wish five to be given to my company, and the remaining five to be sent to my mother." On the address was written—

"If a Frenchman should pick up this purse, I feel sure he will fulfil my intentions; if not, perhaps the finder will consent to be French for the occasion, and carry out the last wishes of a soldier dying for his country."

"A poor young Zouave," writes Père Damas, "had just received the last sacraments of the church.

"'Mon Père,' said he to the worthy Aumônier, 'would you do one thing for me? . . . . . I so much want you to write to my mother!' and he looked at his poor mutilated arm, amputated at the elbow:—the look was full of eloquence. He had borne the operation nobly, but now his eyes filled with tears as he thought of the mother he should never see again, and to whom it was denied to him even to address his last adieu.

"'Give me her address, my child, I will not fail to write to her.'

"'And you will write her a nice letter?—Oh, yes,' he added, pensively, 'a nice letter.'

"'I promise it faithfully.'

"'Oh, but father!—Do you see, it must be a *very* nice letter,' he continued, with touching earnestness, and he half rose from his pillow. 'My mother is so poor:—she is a beggar. All my life through how often I vexed her! . . . and now that I am so sorry for it, I cannot tell her so! If God were to spare my life, I would employ it all in trying to make up for the grief I have occasioned her; but I shall die—I know I shall . . . . and I can never ask her forgiveness. If I had anything, I would send it to her, but I have nothing—nothing in the world! Oh, Monsieur l'Aumônier, write her something that will console her!'

"I knelt beside the bed of this excellent young man, and rejoiced in these tokens of a repentance which was so deep that it manifestly magnified his offences in his own eyes. I took the beggar-woman's address, and before his corpse was cold I began to pen my letter. It may seem strange, but I was more embarrassed how to write to this poor creature than had I been composing an address to the Empress. I felt I could not say too much to console one who needed so much consolation, and I feared to fall short of my intentions. I did my best, however; and I hope that when the Curé of the parish through whom I sent them, deciphered my lines for her, he also added his modicum of balm to the wounded heart of the poor young Zouave's mother."

A young officer tells us that one day he was travelling across the plain as the evening drew in, in company with a priest, who rode a mule, while he was on horseback. Between the camp they had quitted and that to which they were journeying they had to traverse large tracts of country, solitary and silent, but full of tranquil beauty, enhanced by the still hour of parting day. Suddenly, by the side of the road they perceived a noiseless object. Familiar as they were with the sight of wounded corpses, they were naturally prepared to find it was the body of some unfortunate soldier who had dropped there. The priest slid down from his mule, and begging his friend to hold the bridle, was soon by the side of the poor sufferer, for it was even as they had supposed, and a dying Zouave was before him.

"I saw him," says the officer, "kneel down, raise the poor fellow's dying head to his breast, and whisper to him words which must have fallen like balm upon the ear of one who had given himself up as forsaken, and doomed to die unheeded and forgotten.

"After the lapse of a few minutes he returned towards me, and seeing a troop of soldiers approaching, he called to them to lend their aid in removing their unfortunate comrade. They lifted him up—the poor fellow was already a corpse.

"We had resumed our journey; the *Aumônier* walked his mule by my side; both were sad, and neither

spoke. At length breaking silence, 'Do you know,' said he, 'what that poor man said to me before he breathed his last sigh? He said, 'I was taken with the cholera two hours ago; I fell on this spot. I had been fervently praying that God would suffer a priest to pass by, when I saw you arrive.'"

"The French officers are very good to us," says an English soldier writing from the Crimea, "but those regiments which fraternize the most readily with ours are the Zouaves and the Chasseurs d'Afrique. The Zouaves amalgamate wonderfully with our Highlanders, and are continually asking to be placed in line with them in battle."

During the month of September the cholera raged with fearful severity on board the "Bayard;" the *infirmiers* themselves at last succumbed. The Colonel of the Zouaves was forced to make an appeal to the devotedness of his men in order to improvise a new corps of *infirmiers*. They readily responded to his expectations, and nursed the patients with self-abnegation, charity, and courage. A score of the men, commanded by Serjeant Gonneau, were entrusted with this unattractive and hazardous duty, and all were subsequently rewarded with marks of distinction.

In order to relieve the tedium of the long passage, and at the same time to divert the thoughts of the men from the gloomy spectacle offered by the first battery in which were the cholera-patients, the Co-

lonel suggested to the ship's captain, Borius, in command of the "Bayard," to organize on board a succession of entertainments. Every day, after the evening meal, the band of the Zouaves played quadrilles, waltzes, and polkas; then, sailors, soldiers and cabin-boys would get up a dance, and perform the most eccentric choregraphic exhibitions.

The officers thronged the poop, the Zouaves and Chasseurs climbed into the nets and gangways, the sailors occupied the foretops and the lower yards of the mainmast and foremast. The ball was succeeded by a concert, and the singers, under the direction of the Zouave Roussel, disguised and costumed, and taking the gallery of the quarter-deck for their stage, soon spread merriment among the men, and brought smiles into the saddest countenances by their *scenas* and comic songs.

This clever and spirited manager was a desperate fellow in the regiment, and cared for no one. He had been deprived of the grade of Corporal some days before the formation, of the battalions destined for the army of the East, at Oran. Reduced to the position of private in the third battalion appointed to remain in Algeria, he remembered that the Colonel had once taken much interest in him, and during a review he requested to be ranked among the effectives.

"I grant you your petition," answered the Colonel, "although I generally reserve these favours

for my best soldiers; but if I give you this post of honour it is on this condition, that you get yourself killed in the first engagement, in order to rid your family of such a scapegrace."

Roussel replied, that, living or dying, he would contrive to reinstate himself in the Colonel's good graces. Good-humoured, witty, full of spirits, Roussel rendered essential service to the regiment in organizing all the amusements and entertainments of which he was the life and soul. Before they landed the Colonel was desirous of naming him "*Zouave de 1ère classe.*" Roussel, however, begged that this honour might only be conferred on him after the first battle. It was not long before he earned his reward, for at the Alma he gained the position that had been previously offered him, and subsequently obtained the grades of Corporal and of Sergeant, besides winning the military medal by risking his life in reconnoitring during the night the advanced posts of the Russians, and the external faubourgs of Sebastopol.

A wounded Zouave lay stretched upon an ambulance-waggon beside a Russian. "Ah, you rascal," said he, "you took off my right hand, but I have the left one remaining to avenge it."

"Nay, nay," observed a comrade, "it was fair play; he was a soldier like yourself, and was only doing his duty."

"That is true," replied the other, "I ought not

to owe him a grudge. Here, old fellow, let's make it up," and extending his left arm, he shook him cordially by the hand.

The pet cats of the Zouaves have acquired a European celebrity, and the fact of their interesting themselves in such pets speaks eloquently for the gentler side of their character, and shows incidentally its simplicity and *naïveté*. A Zouave of the 1st regiment possessed a monkey of very original temperament, and affording much entertainment to all his acquaintance by his drollery and fun. The poor beast lost his master at the Alma, and appeared to mourn him with tenderness and sincerity. He never recovered his wonted spirits, and was therefore no longer of the same benefit to the company; the men, however, acting upon the suggestion, "Love me, love my dog," continued to pet him for his master's sake, and he in his turn continued to accompany the regiment—*haud passibus æquis*—whithersoever it went, thus testifying his appreciation of the kindness of those who noticed and consoled him in his affliction. When tired during a march, he would climb up with confiding freedom and seat himself upon the knapsack of one of the men who were always willing to give the poor bereaved monkey a lift.

One point which we must not pass over in our notice of the Zouave is his humanity, and even generosity, towards his foes. We read of one who

severely chastised a Turk whom he saw ill using a wounded Russian, and of another who, himself wounded, and crossing the field of battle, perceived a Russian still breathing, but lying among the dead. The first movement of the poor fellow was to hide his head under a corpse, hoping thus to escape observation, and to wait for an opportunity of crawling away, unless fortunate enough to be picked up by one of his own nation. The Zouave, however, approached him, and taking his hand, endeavoured by signs to reassure him. The Russian, although at first doubting the sincerity of his new friend, soon saw he might trust him, and begged for a little water, which was instantly given him. He then made signs that he needed the aid of a surgeon, and the Zouave, on examination, found a frightful wound in his shoulder. He lost no time in getting him conveyed to the hospital, and did not retire until he had seen him under the surgeon's hands. The eyes of the grateful Russian sparkled with gratitude, and he felt about him for some token to testify the feeling which could not find expression in language. At length, he drew from around his neck a medal of the Blessed Virgin, which he begged his protector to accept. We might record multitudes of similar incidents. The most fertile imagination could scarcely picture to itself the contrasts continually presented by that strange and novel world, the batttle-field.

In close proximity to the hospital and the church might be seen a third building, of an original and extemporaneous character, known throughout the entire camp as the "*Théâtre des Zouaves*," a construction resembling that mimic toy which forms the delight of children, only on a colossal scale, and with boards constructed to be trodden by men and not by marionettes and pasteboard figures. There was the festooned arch, spread broadly out, supported by pilasters, and behind it hung the curtain, on which an expert but uneducated pencil had traced the majestic folds of the conventional crimson velvet drapery. It stood upon a slight eminence, and was surrounded by an amphitheatre or hemicycle consisting of small mounds of earth destined as seats for the spectators. Up to the 18th of June this spot was a nightly scene of gaiety and merriment, but alas! its end was abrupt; in a few short hours the entire company of soldier-actors was broken up, the "properties" demolished, the scenery destroyed, and the very building swept away! The Russian bullets had carried off the "*père noble*," the lover, the comic singer, and even the "*Jeune première*" herself, for as upon the classic stage the characters of the women were played by men, here they were undertaken by young Zouaves.

But the simple village maiden of the previous evening was always ready to resume her real character on the shortest notice, to tear open the cartridge, to handle

the firelock, or, if necessary, to die a soldier's death. The engagement in question proved it.

Those who undertook to become actors for the amusement of the rest were free from the daily routine of duty, but they were not exempted from fighting, neither would they have wished it. They studied their parts in the trenches. The compulsory suspension of the performance of the 18th June is the most glorious incident in the history of the Zouave actors, and this circumstance, perhaps as touching as it is amusing, shows the dauntless and indomitable spirit latent in the French army. How, indeed, is it possible to be a match for men who thus brave danger, who fight, by way of interlude, between two couplets, and come off the stage prepared to meet their fate? The theatre of the Zouaves did not long remain closed; a new structure shortly arose, a new company was soon formed, and it is hardly credible of what service these entertainments proved, in raising the spirits and diverting the attention of the men from their too gloomy contemplations.

These wonderful performers, whose versatility is so extraordinary, and who always seem to be equal to the difficulties of their position, have, since the peace has been established, astonished not only the French, but the English public with a specimen of their talent, which is of no mean order. They are, in fact, perfect and inimitable in what they attempt, and it is difficult to believe they are not *artistes* trained to the stage by

the long practice and experience of a professional career. The leviathan of the press, indeed, was incredulous as to their genuineness, now fully proved, and the critics in general bore gratifying testimony to their success. "Perhaps," says a leading journal, describing the effect they produced in this country, "as a whole, more finished actors never paced the boards, always confining themselves to the class of pieces adapted with such rare skill and appositeness. Who, on seeing Glatigny, in his incomparable make-up as Rosita, a young Russian, in 'Militaire et Pensionnaire,' or as the coquettish, half-subdued grisette in the 'Petites Misères de la Vie Humaine,' carolling in a duet, or revelling in a roundelay, could ever imagine that that slim figure embodied the bravest of the brave amongst a proverbially heroic class, that the sweet and feminine tones so wonderfully imitated, could change in an instant to the trumpet of war, and fill all ears, nigh and afar off, with the thunder-shout of battle? Yet this is exactly his forte. Observe him with Lucien in the 'Ambuscade at Inkermann,' they are the 'ladies' of the 'Episode;' the impersonation is perfect,—voice, gesture, pose, are light, graceful, playful,—when, anon, a sudden attack of the Russians transforms these mincing females into heroes of the musket, handling their weapon with a masterly ease, falling into the ranks as if they had never left them, and in an instant transforming the assumed soprano tones into the

resonant bass of earnest and resolute men. Nor has all been mere stage play, for the performances of the Zouaves in the Crimea were not unfrequently interrupted by a surprise on the part of the enemy, and on different occasions it happened that the 'lady performers' were killed in their disguises, rushing out as they were, in female attire, to repulse the assailants. Of Glatigny, who is, if possible, the greatest favourite, it is known that in a desperate hand-to-hand encounter, he carried off a Russian standard at the Tchernaya. Would any one, seeing him here with the rustic gait, demure bearing, and feminine voice of a *naïve* country lass, believe that he ever bore away a standard? Yet he was regarded as the most reckless amongst the reckless, and so thirsty for warfare, that, invalided as a Turco officer, he enlisted as soon as convalescent, as a private amongst the Zouaves, still lying under the walls of the uncaptured Malakoff. And there too is Sebastian, now dressed as the old portress, high-capped, frowsy, snuffy and fussy, but representing to the life some well-preserved specimen of the coinage of the Faubourg St. Germain, or of the Quartier Latin. Well, this apparently garrulous old lady of the 'pas de fumée sans feu' ('no smoke without fire' school), found himself alone at the Tchernaya amidst a crowd of Russian foes, and by desperate valour, agility, and strength, cut his way triumphantly through them to his comrades. These

are actions which only attend great events, and without which they would not have existed, for those events gave them birth. These actors are the creation of a war of giants."

It was on the 31st of May that the 3rd regiment of Zouaves added new laurels to its reputation at the battle of Palestro by the glorious feat of arms which earned for it the honour of being placed first on the list of victorious regiments.

Some days before the battle, this regiment was at Tortona, where the men had given a theatrical entertainment. We subjoin the play-bill as it was sent out from the "*Théâtre de la Guerre.*" It is full of humour.

THÉATRE DE TORTONA.

(Without the permission of M. le Maire.)

This day, 23rd May, 1859,

The Comedians of the Company of the 3rd Zouaves will give, in honour of the battle of Montebello, won by the Austrians over the French and Piedmontese,

For the first time,

UNE BONNE RACLÉE,

tragedy in one act, interspersed with couplets improvised for the occasion.

MADAME RISTORI being unable to arrive in time, her character will be taken by M. Beauvallet (*not* of the "Comédie Française"), but Jean Beauvallet, corporal of the clarionets, who will play on that instrument, and further will take the character of the Sergent Reclamoet.

JOBIN AND NANETTE,

Arranged in three acts to please the Piedmontese.

A BALLET,
Executed by the handsomest men of the battalion.

INTERLUDE.

The Cantinier of the Corps will shave without a looking-glass. The performance will take place in the open air, at the entrance of the Camp; in case of rain, it will go on all the same. Any one who likes may smoke: those who do not, are not obliged. Entrance "RIEN."

The success of the Zouaves as actors in the Crimea need scarcely be alluded to now, nor perhaps the occasions when on their way back they earned considerable sums for charitable institutions by giving representations in the large towns through which they passed.

These, however, are far from being the sole occasions on record in which the French soldier has ingeniously afforded amusement to his comrades, and to civilians in time of peace, or has known how to relieve the tedium of a campaign by exhilarating and spirited entertainments. One of the earliest and most curious on record is, perhaps, that which marked the blockade of Tiemcen, during the African war. The history of the whole engagement is full of interest, and forms a valuable study of the character of the *troupier Français*, when seen to the best advantage—*i. e.* upon active service.

The French consider that Algeria has done everything for their army, and that their country, which received with comparative indifference and

apathy the news of this conquest, has never duly appreciated its value and importance.

It was the Maréchal Clausel who headed the expedition on this occasion, and on quitting the town, of which he had been in occupation, he asked for 500 men to form a garrison there. 2000 presented themselves, and the selection being made, the little force, commanded by General—then Capitaine—Cavaignac, installed itself at Mechouar, a fortified inclosure, situated at the eastern extremity of the town, in order to command and defend it. The garrison was supposed to be provisioned for some time, but at the expiration of two months of severe blockade, the deficit was considerable, and the rations were necessarily reduced to the smallest proportions. It was not the water alone that ran short, the fresh meat was gone, and even the salt stores were disappearing fast, so that it is more easy to imagine than to describe the effect produced upon the appetites of the famished soldiers as they contemplated, day after day, the rounded contours of the innumerable Arab flocks feeding upon the short and tender grass which clothed the heights crested by their ramparts, or reposing in the shade of the olive trees and oleanders which enrich that luxuriant province.

It was impossible to resist such a sight, and at last they gave in. An open attack was out of the question, and it was plain that recourse must be had to a stratagem of war.

Among the 500 men who composed the garrison there was a company of Zouaves called the "*Déterminés*," it might have been more properly denominated the "Devil's Own."

During the daytime the Arabs remained beyond the fire of the French guns, but at night the flocks crowded together in a mass under cover of the forest of olive trees. A general *sortie* took place, the Arab marauders were repulsed, and after some amount of firing, the column retired, weakened by fifty men; that is to say, the "infernal troop" were missing in a body! At sunset the shepherds arrive as usual with their flocks. At midnight the whistle of the blackbird is heard, the cry of the screech-owl responds; fifty demons—as the Arabs afterwards declared—were suddenly seen to drop from the trees, and that, with such marvellous precision that each found himself astride upon an ox of first-rate quality. Four or five of the herdsmen, completely stupefied by the unexpected nature of the onset, were there rolled up in their *burnouses*, but before they could utter their favourite invocation—"Allah!" they found themselves in the centre of the Mechouar, with their fifty head of cattle, from which the marauders had no wish to separate them.

Now, therefore, there was plenty of meat, the next task was to provide bread. The *Déterminés* start on a fresh exploit. They provide themselves with sacks, and as they know where to find the

"*silos*" (or underground stores), all they have to do is to empty them; this was no sooner resolved upon than it was accomplished. They secured their booty, and were hastening back with it, when the Arabs, having got wind of the foraging expedition, —just when, at break of day, the little band was almost out of danger, and was in sight of the mosques of the town,—poured down from all points of the horizon, bidding fair to overtake the spoilers. A few yards more and they would have been safe under the cannon of the Mechouar; but these daring fellows had mistaken the road, and they found themselves driven back to the very edge of the rocks which bound the southern extremity of the *plateau;* add to the perils of the situation the fact that the space comprised between these slopes and the ramparts of the town was at a distance of some hundred metres.

The Arabs shouted for joy on seeing their spoilers entrapped within arm's length on one side, and only a few yards from the brow of the abyss on the other. Certain of their capture, they spurred on their horses in pursuit. Fifty guns were fired as a last salute; the charge was repeated; but when the smoke had dispersed, and the Bedouins—themselves now so near the edge of the precipice that another step would precipitate them over its headlong height—drew up their horses to arrest their further progress, the band of desperadoes had disappeared! Unable

to descend into the steep ravine, they had leapt it, having first flung their sacks across!. "Only fancy," said one of these intrepid fellows, "one of us was clumsy enough to give himself a sprain, and we only had about a dozen feet to leap!"

Thus a supply of food was obtained; the next business was to procure clothing. Of their capotes, kepis, and trousers, the buttons were nearly all that remained! In the shops and warehouses of Tiemcen there was nothing to be had but tissues of white wool, such as the Arabs use to make their kaïks and their *burnous*. Finding nothing better, they were fain to make shift with it. They dyed the capotes blue, and the pantaloons, left of their original white, soon assumed a natural tint of grey. As for *chaussure*, that was another matter: the *Déterminés* had seized a camel laden with Morocco skins, and as the French soldier in campaign possesses a smattering of every trade, and becomes by turns tailor, hatter, and shoemaker, in the course of a week after the seizure of this prize, the whole garrison sported Morocco boots.

With black lamb-skins they had manufactured head-coverings for the grenadiers, and the remainder of the men wore white hats.

It was in this costume that the garrison presented itself before the *corps d'armée* of Oran, consisting of 6000 men, commanded by General Bugeaud, who expected to find it reduced to a gaunt array of

denuded skeletons; so far from this, the men were full of life and spirits.

In the evening, the marauding expedition was celebrated by a theatrical representation, of which the following is the bill:—

THÉATRE DE TIEMCEN.
Without the permission of M. le Maire,
This day, 25th June, 1836,
The Company of Mechouar will give,
in honour of the column of Oran,
A THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION EXTRAORDINARY,
consisting of
LE COLONEL CHABERT,
In Three Acts, re-arranged by the men of the battalion.
PIERROT MORT ET VIVANT,
Pantomime in One Act by Zephyr,
an old friend and pupil of the celebrated DEBUREAU,
who only wanted a J. J. to be as well known as his master.
INTERMÈDES CHANTANTS ET COMIQUES.
INTRODUCTION TO ROBERT LE DIABLE,
Arranged for a violin and flageolet.
Entrance—ZERO.

N.B. The performance will take place in the gardens of Mechouar. It is requested that the seats reserved for the *état major* may be respected. Doors open and performances commence at 8 o'clock. Smoking *is* allowed. N.B. If any of our comrades happen to have any white bread to spare they may drop it, as they pass, into the basket which stands at the entrance, provided they are satisfied with the entertainment.

At eight o'clock, as announced, and with a punctuality worthy of more civilised localities, the performance began. General Bugeaud was there with his *état-major;* General Mustapha, the indigenous chiefs of Tiemcen, and 4,000 spectators. Armed pickets disposed along the road, watched over the safety of all; and above the theatre, at a distance of about twenty feet, a sentinel was keeping his vigil on the ramparts. The drama of Colonel Chabert—the maiden literary effort of the young, clever, and intelligent director of the "Vaudeville"—with which the proceedings opened, is founded on a novel of Balzac's. It is the history of a Colonel of the Empire, officially reported as having been slain on the field of battle, but who, returning unexpectedly a few years subsequently, finds his supposed "widow" married a second time. The lady, being perfectly reconciled to her position, pretends not to recognise him, but he possesses proofs of his identity; his wife, by stratagem, steals away his papers, then denying the truth of his pretensions, drives him away, and the poor Colonel becomes insane.

One of the amateur artists of the battalion of Tiemcen happened to have an old copy of the piece, but he had lost about twenty pages of the closing portion; it therefore became necessary to remodel the plot. The new one was less dismal than the former, as the military comedians had taken upon themselves to declare the second marriage

null, and to restore to the husband his adored wife. This *dénouement*—more moral than that of "Jane Eyre"—was received with transports of applause. The part of "Madame la Colonelle" was taken by a young Zouave, whose naturally refined countenance relidered his metamorphosis into a great lady an admirable illusion.

When "Colonel Chabert" made his entry, wearing a showy uniform of royal blue, covered with gold embroidery, and epaulettes as glittering as if they had just come from the manufactory of a trimming-maker, four thousand bravos welcomed the rich *mise en scène*. It was almost incredible! How had they managed to possess themselves of so costly a costume? Whence came these fresh gold embroideries? The truth was, that gold epaulettes, gold braidings, gold belts, all were made of tinsel, but with a skill so admirable, that it was only when handed round among the company for close inspection, that they could be convinced of the real nature of the material.

An episode, which was not announced upon the bills, added to the evening's entertainment. A distant explosion was heard beyond the rampart, and a ball came whizzing over the heads of the performers. The sentry responded, and leaning forward in the direction whence the attack proceeded, he addressed his invisible adversary with—"Eh! là bas. Couldn't you manage to wait till the play is over? we

have got company here—let us finish our evening in peace, and then we are at your service." Then, turning to the spectators, he said—"You needn't disturb yourselves, gentlemen, it's all right:" the firing, however, went on; but so did the piece.

The pantomime consisted of a succession of clever and ludicrous comic scenes, and *tours d'adresse*, each more surprising than the last, all calling forth rapturous applause. Mustapha-Pacha, himself the gravest of all the Arabs, was totally unable to repress his mirth: he laughed as probably he had never laughed before.

Such are the amusements of the soldier, in the midst of that adventurous and uncertain life in which none know what the morrow may bring forth. Two days after, the army was in movement, and overtook Abd-el-Kader at the Sickar, where he was defeated.

The battalion of regulars formed by the Emir, received, without flinching, the charge of the 2nd Chasseurs d'Afrique; but it was overcome, and of this battalion there only remained standing 162 men, who were taken captive, and were the first prisoners sent to France after the conquest of Algeria.

Many amusing stories might be told of the marauding exploits of the Zouaves.

Some days after the Alma, when the army was marching upon Sebastopol, at the passage of Balbeck, a rich village, deserted by its inhabitants, was encountered on the line of march; they found gar-

dens abounding with vegetable produce, and trees laden with fruit; that night at the bivouac supper the dishes were numerous. A party of Zouaves having taken it into their heads to visit a Château at some distance, they brought back, among other treasures, an elegant mirror, richly framed in Dresden china, with a border of shepherdesses in Boucher's style. This glass they smuggled into their Colonel's tent, and surrounding it with moss and branches, they formed one of the most elegant little boudoirs imaginable, at sight of which, on his return for the night, he was considerably puzzled to know whence this sudden reflection of home in a foreign land had arrived.

The following is a characteristic and highly descriptive picture of the campaigning life of the Zouave:—

"The Sergeant," says the writer, "who had been invited to a bivouac-supper, *sub tegmine fagi*, had made the most of his position. It was under the lee of a wall, now half dilapidated, but which at one time had formed the gable-end of a *cascina*, or farm-house, 'fashioned by long-forgotten hands.' The glaring colours of drapery—remains of a fresco, with which nearly all such buildings, in that country, are bedizened within and without—could be discovered by the light of the bivouac fire, together with several bold sketches by Zouave artists.

"In the centre was a mud-hearth, or oven, over which simmered the handy little *marmite-jumelle*, or twin camp-kettle. My friend's needle, with which

he was busily engaged in dexterously repairing the rents in his jacket, fortunately for me, kept pace with his tongue, so that he had soon finished, and proceeded to serve up the savoury contents of the kettle, which had long been tantalizing my appetite. He produced a couple of *gamelles* (or soup-basins), and we proceeded to discuss the meal, which consisted of two fine fat fowls stewed with vegetables and maccaroni, and a flavouring worthy of Phillippe. A bottle of wine washed down this veritable banquet. I produced a real Havannah, which I presented to my host, and in the course of conversation, ventured to inquire whence he had purchased his poultry. His bronzed countenance relaxed into a roguish laugh, and assuming a look of comic sympathy, he replied, shrugging his shoulders, 'Hélas, ils s'étaient perdus! de pauvres oiseaux sans asile! J'en ai pris pitié.'

"Let the Zouaves find themselves in an enemy's country, in a territory abandoned by its inhabitants after a desperate struggle; knapsack on shoulder, gun in hand, their mouths still blackened with powder, they will soon have overturned and ransacked everything. No object escapes their scrutinizing glance; valuables, garments, provisions of all sorts, poultry, dried fruits, jars of oil, everything, no matter what, goes to their bivouac, and they find a use for all. On the other hand, they are equally susceptible, and equally active in a nobler

cause, and if they love marauding, it is rather for the display of the skill it calls forth, and the excitement it affords, than for the sake of the booty.

"On one occasion, during the Crimean war, on their return from the village adjoining Old-fort, they diverted their comrades with a grotesque spectacle. They arrived at the bivouac, escorting one of those open calêches peculiar to that part of the world, in which was seated one of their comrades absurdly accoutred, and by his side, costumed to represent a Tartar lady, sat a very fat young calf. This was their way of bringing home a prisoner of war in triumph—'curru codem,'—and of course the quadruped shortly became veal; but these generous fellows, indifferent about their own table, sent it to the ambulance as a relish for the convalescents, who were completely without fresh meat. Not that the Zouaves have any objection, however, to good cheer when it is to be had, for they are capable of enjoying creature-comforts as keenly as civilians: witness the memorable incident in Algeria, which shows how a party of Zouaves belonging to the 1st regiment contrived to bamboozle their excellent old General, *Père* Bugeaud (as his men loved to call him), and to procure a succession of *piéces de résistance* for their mess. A large flock of sheep had been taken, and the unsuspecting Maréchal had placed them, as he thought, in close keeping, under a strong guard. In the middle of the night, however, a party of Zouaves, up to fun as

usual, and delighted at the opportunity of outwitting the men of another regiment, arose stealthily, and by a preconcerted plan, each man selecting his victim, cut its throat, bearing away the spoil, which was to supply him, not only with food from its flesh, but with bedding from its skin. All would have gone smoothly, but for one of the plunderers, who, less adroit than the rest, was not expeditious enough in his operations, and the creature, bounding away from his hold, bleated so loudly as to awake the guard, and very soon the Maréchal himself was on the spot. Torches and lanterns were brought, the sheepfold was searched, and the slaughtered sheep were declared missing; but not a trace was to be discovered of the assailants! The men were called out: none were absent, and the plunderers stood up boldly among the rest, looking perfectly incapable of mischief or treachery. No intelligence of the deed could be obtained—'no one knew anything about the matter'—there was nothing to be said, and all returned once more to their couches. Certain rumours, however, having reached the Maréchal's ears next morning, his suspicions were confirmed, and indeed he confessed that he felt sure the very neatly-contrived plot could only have been devised and executed by those '*coquins de Zouaves.*' In order, therefore, to ensure the security of his live stock, he placed them on the following night under the protection of the Zouaves themselves; he knew them

well, and of course none were missing. They were too honourable to pilfer from what had been confided to their keeping, and no one else was likely to hazard the experiment of attacking property while under their charge."

After one of their African campaigns, the Zouaves, during the march, formed the rear-guard. The entire column, bringing with it an immense population, was returning to its quarters which it had but tardily reached after long following the fortunes of Abd-el-Kader. The vanguard had started at four o'clock in the morning, and although the march was over a flat country, it was seven o'clock before the last families which followed them had quitted the bivouac. It was necessary to travel eleven miles to find water. That day the Zouaves behaved like Sisters of Charity—sharing their biscuit with those poor creatures whom fatigue and heat had overcome, and when their water-skins were empty, placing the little children under a sheep or a goat, that they might obtain a draught of milk to sustain their flagging strength. When night drew in, and the travellers encamped, neither fowl nor tortoise was found in their pouches, but they were bringing back women, children, and old men, whose lives they had saved, proving themselves as generous as brave; it is not difficult for those who command them to repress their evil instincts, and to develop their nobler sentiments. They can only be managed by a

judicious combination of firmness and affection, and a severe discipline, of which it is necessary occasionally, but prudently, to relax the springs. They require commanders in whom they can confide, and whom they can love and respect, while they fear them.

But we have not yet seen them at the bivouac. They are approaching their halting-place after a long, tedious, and fatiguing march; and to men whose celebrated "night-marches" have passed into a military proverb, a day-march must indeed be severe to be styled "fatiguing." A number of the men quit the ranks and run to the welcome spring to fill all the water-vessels before the stream becomes turbid by the trampling of the horses and mules.

The halt is sounded, the battalion ceases to advance, and draws up in line in the position assigned to it. Whilst the superior officers themselves mark the outposts, the piles of arms are formed on the line of battle. The tentes-abri are set up, fires are seen blazing as if by enchantment. Those told off for the duty distribute the provisions and cartridges; the cooks set to work; others cut up wood, for there is the night to be provided for; some furbish their arms, and some repair their clothes by means of that wonderful and indispensable *trousse* of the French soldier which made our soldiers smile when they first saw it in the Crimea, but which they ultimately learned to respect, and not without reason.

And now the soup is manufactured, but the rations of meat distributed, are not served with it—they are retained to stew for the next meal, after the *Diane*. The evening soup is made with onions, bacon, and bread, if any remain; if not, it is made with coffee; that is to say, a mess is prepared with biscuit-crumbs and coffee, which, if not palatable, has the merit of being found nourishing and tonic.

Occasionally there are sportsmen, anglers, or, at all events, foragers, who start off on an exploring expedition, and return to enrich the feast with game, fish, eggs, fruit or poultry, according to what the neighbourhood may offer; and none inquire too closely into the source of the supply, which is not perhaps always strictly orthodox.

But business is not neglected all this time, for while the meal has been dispatched, and the pipe smoked, the sentinels have been noiselessly relieved, and the country has been reconnoitred—often an ambuscade is laid, and instead of being surprised themselves, the Zouaves have detected, ensnared, and fallen upon those who came to attack them.

An incident, characteristic of the ingenuity and audacity of the Zouave, is said to have occurred in Algeria, and is worth relating here.

An officer of Zouaves had been invited to breakfast with the Commander-in-Chief, and while discussing some rare champagne, to which he had treated his guest, the latter offered him a friendly hint

to keep his counsel as to the wine; for if any of the Zouaves, or, as they were surnamed in Algeria, the "*chacals*," came to know of its existence, they might perhaps ease him of the basket and its contents.

"I am not much afraid of that," said the General, laughing; "with my 'tiger' and my sentry, I don't think there is any great danger of even a Zouave's penetrating here."

"I don't think my Zouaves would trouble themselves much about your means of defence," said the officer, "if they once took it into their heads to appropriate it, and no sentry, were he the '*diable en personne*,' would stop them."

"I don't know that."

"What will you bet me they won't succeed? I will undertake to have the prize seized and carried off, even though you were to double your guard."

"Done!" cried the Commandant. "Let the wine be the stake."

The Zouave officer went back to his tent, and beckoning to a sly, determined private, he observed, confidentially: "I have just been breakfasting with the Commandant; he has got some capital champagne."

"You don't say so, Capitaine?"

"Yes, I do, and it seems a pity to leave it there; so when you have a minute to spare——You understand."

"All right, Capitaine."

The Zouave walked round after dusk, and reconnoitred the spot. An idea came into his head, and it proved the very one for his purpose. At the back of the General's tent was a piece of grass-land, where his horses were picketed. The Zouave, taking a considerable round, arrived, without being seen, at the spot. His next step was to let loose the horses, and then gliding back the other way, to reach the front of the General's tent. Here he proceeded to give the alarm. "Halloo! you are pretty fellows to be sauntering quietly here, and the General's horses have broken loose, and are scouring the country! Be off in double-quick time, or you will have a rare chase after them." At first he was not believed, but the batman, having gone to see whether they were in their usual place, returned to the sentry with the assurance that the statement was correct, and that there was no time to be lost. Down went his arms accordingly, and off set both at once to search after the missing cattle, leaving the place completely unguarded. The sequel may be guessed. The next day the Capitaine returned his Chief's invitation, and asked him to dinner. A bottle of champagne was drawn in his honour, of which he pronounced very favourably.

"I think the quality is not far short of yours," observed the Capitaine, as he tossed off another glass, and poured out a second for his guest.

"Well . . . really, I don't know but that it is,"

observed the General, as he held up the glass and smacked his lips.

"It could not well be inferior," replied the Capitaine, quietly, "seeing that it *is* yours!"

"Mine! How? What do you mean—*mine?*"

"Yes, General; you've lost your wager;" and pointing to the back of the tent, he exhibited the identical basket, which the original owner was not slow to recognize.

"Well," said he, good-humouredly, "I admit they *are* incorrigible rascals, those Zouaves of yours. Let us have the scoundrel in, and make him drink a bottle of it on the spot."

Towards the end of November, 1856, the French advanced posts, opposite the quarantine port, one day remarked an unusual movement in the Russian garrison, and began to suspect the Russians had received some reinforcements. It was important to ascertain the fact, and with this object they decided on taking a Russian vidette, in order to obtain accurate information respecting the matter. The French tried every expedient without success, and at last were obliged to have recourse to the Zouaves.

During a dark and rainy night, a Russian vidette, fancying he heard a rustling in the brushwood, advanced beyond his usual line. The noise and movement preceded his steps; he followed stealthily, and so absorbed in the pursuit was he, as not to observe

how far he had transgressed his bounds. His curiosity was now aroused. "Qui vive?" he cries. The grunt of a pig is the only reply to his appeal.

"Ah," thought he, "it is, as I ventured to hope; one of those delicious animals has escaped from the enemy's live stock, and has come to assuage our ravenous appetites." He began to sniff the crackling roast, and almost to taste the delicate white flesh. "No expedient," continued he, "within my power shall be left untried to gain possession of this treasure;" and placing himself on all fours, he buried his form in the underwood, and began to imitate the grunt of the animal he was pursuing. The coveted prize is within his reach; he throws down his gun in order to seize it; but what is his dismay, when he finds himself overpowered by a muscular Zouave, who leaps upon him like a panther, throws him down, and gags him! At the same moment a shrill whistle is heard, and five Zouaves appear, who carry off the Russian!

The Beni-Snassen of Algeria are great lovers of gunpowder, and will hover about the camps, offering large bribes to the French soldiers in order to get it out of them, pretending they are inveterate sportsmen.

One day it came to the ears of the authorities that the Zouaves had been selling powder. Great was the wrath of the Commander of the *bureau Arabe;* he insisted on knowing who were the culprits, and promised to chastise them severely. A

pretended Arab, disguised for the purpose, went mysteriously to the men and asked for powder to purchase. An old Zouave brought him four cartridges, for which he asked twenty francs. At this the spy declared himself, seized the seller, and carried him before the Commandant.

"It is you, then, *vieux scélérat,*" said the latter to him, "who sell powder to the Beni-Snassen, that they may kill your brethren-in-arms."

"Yes, mon Commandant, it is I."

"Well, then, you have committed an act of infamy and cowardice; but with this very powder I will have you shot."

"I will save you that trouble, Commandant, and the court-marhsal will not have to sit;" and, with a *sang-froid* magnificent to witness, he loaded a pistol with powder from one of these cartridges, slipped into it a bullet, and pulled the trigger. All present remained mute with astonishment and horror. But the pistol missed fire, and the Zouave laughed loudly.

"There," said he, "is a judge who absolves me."

"How so?"

"*That* is the sort of powder I sold to the Beni-Snassen."

"And how much of this green stuff have you passed off upon them?"

The Zouave exhibited a formidable *mahomet* filled with gold. "'Cute though they be, the Beni-Snas-

sen are not yet a match for the Beni-Mouffetards," said he with a knowing wink.

An anecdote is told of the Zouaves, when in Italy, shewing their condign indignation against the plunderers who hovered round the battle-field, watching their opportunity, when the shades of evening should fall, to glide about among the dead, and plunder their corpses.

It was the morrow of the battle of Solferino, the plain was covered with the slain; a few of the grenadiers had wandered from the camp, to repose under the shelter of a clump of mulberry trees. The excessive fatigue of the previous day made them sleep very heavily. One alone was wakeful, it was his duty to arouse the others in case of an alarm. He saw, approaching stealthily through the dim atmosphere, a band of civilians—if we can call by that name a class of men whom the army has designated as "carrion crows."

For a long time past, these gloomy bandits, who came heartlessly to rob the soldier of his noble shroud—the uniform in which he fell—had been talked of among the men.

The soldier who was watching saw that he might now have an opportunity of taking them in the act. He knew that his friends slept too soundly to wake up, and as for himself, he pretended to be dead. The marauders advanced, gloating over the probable profits of their ghastly trade. They soon perceived the sleeping group.

"Hey-day!" exclaimed the foremost, "here are a snug lot who have been sabred by the enemy. They must have hidden themselves under these trees, but that didn't save them."

"You simpleton," replied one of the others, "don't you see they are asleep? Hey, there! you Zouzous! don't you hear, you're called." No answer.

"You see they *are* dead—as dead as mutton," exclaimed the first energetically. "Now let's set to work and rifle them," and so saying they fell upon our wide-awake friend.

No sooner had the birds of prey touched him, than springing up, to their terror and dismay, he shouted loudly, "*Aux armes!*"

In another second all were on their feet, the banditti completely hemmed in, were seized, each was tied to a tree, and soundly whipped—a memorable instance of wholesale flogging in the French army, which not one of the patients was likely soon to forget, and which for once saved its recipients from ten years of the galleys.

It is said that the characters respectively of the English and the French were wonderfully brought out when acting together in the "Camp du Moulin." The English, so coolly brave in actual strife, were quite at a nonplus during the bivouac. The Zouaves, on the contrary, active and intelligent as beavers, seemed always ready with expedients to

meet every difficulty, and had scarcely hung up their firelocks and their pouches, before they had contrived a dwelling-place, and had prepared a meal even in the most unpromising situations. They knew how to convert their tents into cosy nests, by excluding draughts with every rag they could find; they could excavate cabins in rocks, and would hew out fire-places in an incredibly short space of time.

The English looked on in astonishment at the ingenuity and invention of their allies, and were only too glad to profit by it; for the Zouaves were always pleased to help and put them in the way of getting through their difficulties.

Among the Zouaves was a clever fellow, a corporal of the *sapeurs*, who had done such wonders in the building way, that he had earned the sobriquet of "l'Architecte." Admitted into the *Zouaves de la Garde*, he was one of the first who mounted the batteries of the Malakoff, where he had his leg broken, remained three-and-twenty hours buried under a heap of dead and dying in the moat, was registered as "killed," and marked off the rolls. When, however, the grave-diggers came to bury him, they met with active resistance on his part, and, declining their attentions, he limped away to the hospital, whence, after being nursed and tended, he was drafted to Constantinople; but he resolutely refused to have his limb amputated, and returning after six months, wearing it in a sling, he presented

himself before the Colonel of the Zouaves de la Garde, claiming his place at the head of the *sapeurs*. He is now enjoying, near Paris, his retiring pension, which, thanks to the imperial munificence, is extended to all the wounded and crippled soldiers of the Crimea.

Of gallantry and chivalrous feeling among the Zouaves, we have an amusing instance during one of their marauding expeditions in the neighbourhood of Sebastopol. Having scoured the country in search of adventures, they espied a *maison de plaisance*, of very inviting appearance, when one among their number proposed that they should give the proprietor an opportunity of affording them hospitality. The others readily assented, and they made for the portico. A knock at the large door was only responded to by a hollow echo from within, and a very little further investigation showed that the house was empty; indeed, the fact was, that the owners, alarmed by the state of the surrounding country, had fled.

"In that case we have only to walk in and rest, *without* permission," said the leader of the band. No sooner said than done, and our Zouaves were soon treading the velvet carpets, admiring the choice pictures and sculptures, amusing themselves with the costly toys, musical clocks, and even with the live pets which had been left in the hasty retreat of the owners. They entered a boudoir, where still

remained, on an open pianoforte, a song which, perhaps, had served to entertain some favoured guest the day before; it was entitled, "*Je t'aime.*" One of the Zouaves wrote beneath with a pencil, "*Et moi aussi.*"

Having found some wine and other dainties within reach, they made a luxurious, but moderate, meal, and before leaving this miniature palace, they culled from the garden a magnificent bouquet of flowers, which they deposited in a rich vase on the table, placing near it a note to thank their hosts for the hospitality they had enjoyed, and to beg them to accept this form of acknowledgment.

Letters written at the time from Nice spoke in a gratifying manner of the impression left in that town by the Zouaves of the Imperial Guard, when sent there as an escort of honour to the Empress of Russia. Received with shouts of enthusiasm by the people, these chosen troops at once apprehended the lofty mission they had to fulfil in the name of the Emperor who sent them, of the army which they represented, and the nation to which they belonged; it must be allowed that on every occasion they shewed themselves worthy of the confidence reposed in them.

Every day a picket of honour, headed by an officer, repaired to the palace inhabited by the Empress. Her Majesty often spoke to the sentries. "Never," said she, one day, "should I have expected to find in a private soldier, a tact so

exquisite, a politeness so perfect, and an intelligence so refined. All those to whom I have spoken of the English medal, which glitters on their breast, testify a visible embarrassment, seeking to elude the questions I address them, and to change the conversation."

The Grand-Duke Nicolas, who was at Nice with his august mother, was also greatly pleased with the Zouaves. He knew the majority of the officers personally, called them by their names, and often spoke with the private soldiers.

One day a poor old man was knocked down by a carriage. Two Zouaves, who witnessed the accident, hastened to his assistance; lifting the sufferer in their arms, they carried him home, and on their way were met by the Empress, who was passing. She stopped her carriage and, having inquired into the circumstance, offered to each of the soldiers a gold coin.

"This poor fellow," said one of them, pointing to the injured man, "needs the money more than we. My comrade and I beg your Majesty's permission to hand it to him."

The Empress was delighted with this trait, and used to take great pleasure in relating it.

A battalion of Zouaves was on the point of embarking for foreign service at Marseilles; among them was a young lad, whose delicate appearance alone would have been striking, even had he not attracted

observation by his endeavours to shun it. In short, his demeanour aroused the suspicions of the Colonel, who, seizing him by the arm, forbade him to go any further. On investigation *he* turned out to be a young woman, who hoped, under favour of this disguise, to accompany her Zouave to the battle-field. The Colonel considered it his duty to prevent the execution of this project.

A correspondent from Rome, writing on the 4th June last, says:—

"I have just been passing some days at Anagni, where the pontifical Zouaves are garrisoned, and I was in a position to judge of the unanimity and the spirit which animates this fine corps, as well as of the happy effect which their presence produces upon the population with whom they come in contact, whether in their military marches or their private excursions.

"Unless one had been present at their daily manœuvres, it would be impossible to imagine with what activity their military instruction is given and received. From five o'clock in the morning, during the whole day, gunshots fired at regular intervals apprize you that the ball-practice is taking place in one direction or another. At another point, the 'company drill' and great gun exercise are going on. In short, you may do what you like with those brave fellows; they are ready for any fatigue, and enter

into their work with an ardour and an enthusiasm altogether unexampled.

"Another day, the battalion will start upon a march at four in the morning, will encamp near some village for seven or eight hours, and will return to Anagni at night. Sometimes they have a holiday, and then they may be seen scaling the mountains, exploring the country, visiting all the natural curiosities, and carrying with them into all the surrounding towns and hamlets that cordial gaiety, good humour and benevolence which win the sympathy and good will of all who come into communication with them.

"At Agnani forty poor people are fed by their alms; they say they cannot make a better use of their pay."

Zouaves are not, however, the only military invention distinctively French in the Gallican army; there is, besides the Zouave infantry, that corps which may be termed the Zouave cavalry, or "*Zouaves à cheval*;" more properly speaking still, perhaps, the *Chasseurs d'Afrique*. The necessity of the latter body to render the former complete, seems to have been felt almost immediately after its formation; the infantry dating from October, 1830, and the cavalry from December in the same year. That a feeling of fraternity should spring up between the two corps, evoked almost simultaneously from

the same soil, was to be expected, and the anticipation has been fully realized.

French military writers continually intimate that the hard and rough school of Africa has been of inestimable service in the training of the French soldier, and that the improvement produced among the infantry by the introduction of the Zouave has been equalled by that effected in the cavalry of France by the creation of the Chasseurs d'Afrique. The French soldier, both horse and foot, has been severely tested in the trans-Mediterranean campaigns; and the army has, since those events, given proof of aptitudes and capabilities which it was not till that time suspected of possessing. It remained for the French soldier to develop and ripen under the burning sun and on the scorching plains of Algeria; for these he has been tried by contests which have exercised his courage and his ingenuity, and which have familiarized him with tactics hitherto unknown.

The history of the *Chasseurs*, as exemplifying the difficulties of a military creation successfully surmounted, may be divided into two periods. During the former, *i.e.* from 1830 to 1834, the Arab and the French element might be distinguished working together in the new cavalry; gradually the Arab characteristics disappeared, or rather became in time so happily blended with the French, that the corps assumed a complete type of originality,

which it bids fair always to retain, though now replenished entirely from French sources.

The year 1847 beheld, together with the subjugation of Abd-el-Kader, the termination of a series of valiant exploits, perseveringly followed up by the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th regiments of these fine troops.

Before the existence of the *Chasseur d'Afrique* the French army possessed the "*Chasseur à Cheval,*" whose existence dated from the end of the last century, about ten years before the Revolution; and nobly had this corps responded to its country's call. They had returned covered with glory from Hohenlinden, under their Colonel, Monthun; and, led by Lawæstine, they made a desperate charge upon the English dragoons on the bloody field of Waterloo. It was from a nucleus of these heroes that the new body of *Chasseurs* was formed; and the first element furnished to it was the 17th Regiment of the *Chasseurs à Cheval.* The *Chasseurs d'Afrique* consisted originally of two distinct classes; the first being men clothed, equipped, and mounted at the expense of the state; the second of men taking upon themselves all their expenses. The former were volunteers, the latter Arabs; but they formed one squadron, and were placed under the orders of M. Marey-Monge.*

* This corps must not be confounded with those battalions originally called Chasseurs d'Orlans, and which after the Revolution of 1848 took the name of Chasseurs de Vincennes, and Chasseurs à pied. They were the first regiments in the French

Some of these Arabs were remarkable characters, and among them was one whose name has since attained European celebrity. Yusuf, now a General in the French army, began life clouded by all the obscurity of his mysterious birth — for Yusuf was a foundling, and even his race is unknown, some looking upon him as of Spanish, others as of Moorish origin. Be this as it may, there must be rich, if not noble blood in the veins of a man who by his intelligence and bravery, his ability and amenity of manners, has triumphed over the disadvantages of his position, and who now stands in brilliant pre-eminence in the rank which he has so justly earned.

Yusuf's appearance can scarcely be said to be prepossessing, for he is small in stature, and of a form which the French would characterize as *trapu;* but noble pride and gentle benevolence are blended with the happiest effect in his expressive countenance, and he possesses a freedom of action and cordiality of manner which at once win confidence; while his clear judgment and undaunted energy are qualities invaluable in a commander.

It was at the taking of the *cosbah* of Bona, in 1832, that Yusuf first showed what he was; the episode is so characteristic, not only of this eminent

army which were armed with rifles. A reduction, it is said, is contemplated by the Emperor in the number of squadrons of the Chasseurs d'Afrique.

officer, but also of the organizers of the African cavalry, that it may be well to recall it here.

Towards the close of April, 1832, one hundred and twenty Turks, aided by a French Captain of Artillery, M. d'Armandy, and by the Capitaine Yusuf, who commanded the expedition, rendered themselves masters of this fort, and opened to the French the gates of a new province — that of Constantine. Ibrahim Bey held the place. The first step taken by Yusuf was to address him, in a haughty tone, in the presence of some few Turks devoted to the Bey.

"You have betrayed France," said he, "and France will be avenged of your treason. I am her Envoy, and I come to tell you in her name that you must evacuate the place this very hour, or die."

Ibrahim, furious, replied: "If in an hour's time you are still on my territory I will have your head taken off!"

"And I," retorted the proud Mameluke—"I warn you that if one hair of my beard falls, the King of the French will have you cut in pieces!"

The Bey changed colour, but he commanded the Turks to seize his rash antagonist. Swords were drawn; a struggle ensued. Prompt as a flash of lightning, Yusuf darted forward—he flew towards the first Turk who approached; off flew his head; two, three, four more dropped in the same way! Ibrahim, aghast at the rapid action of his foe, and livid with rage, gazed powerless on the frightful

scene—pinned to the wall by the two pistols of the Capitaine d'Armandy, who seemed to magnetise him with his fiery eye. At length the Bey and his slaves, driven to extremities, asked for quarter. They issued from the citadel to the number of thirty, fled to the mountains, and the green flag of Mahomet was replaced by the colours of France.

Yusuf, who intended that his triumph should be complete, ordered the vanquished garrison to make a general discharge of their arms in honour of the French flag. One single Turk refused compliance; his punishment was summary, and many years afterwards its bloody record might still be seen in the red print of five reeking fingers on the white wall of the palace of the Bey; this blood was that of the contumacious Turk. Thus two intrepid men sufficed to take the city.

The 120 Turks who took part in this exploit were afterwards incorporated into the Arab contingent of the *Chasseurs d'Afrique.*

These men brought into the corps that adventurous spirit and romantic heroism of the Oriental races, which, grafted on to French bravery, were destined to impart to the new corps its distinctive character.

Another of these dauntless fellows, standing prominently forward in the early history of the *Chasseurs,* was Malek, whose life might form the subject of as wild a poem as ever emanated from the regions of

fancy. He was a magnificent type of the masculine beauty of the Oriental races. Born in the island of Elba, he was, while yet a child, taken prisoner by Tunisian pirates; by them he was ultimately sold to the Bey, whose slave he thus became, and in whose palace he grew up, enjoying the favour of his master, who took pride not only in his distinguished appearance, but in the extraordinary spirit and intelligence he had discovered in him. At length he confided to him the care of his seraglio, and this position at once altered the fate of the favourite. The Bey had a daughter, named Zumla, beautiful as a houri, and jealously guarded. Malek, however, saw her, and the two young people, whom nature had formed to strike all who beheld them, as might have been expected, soon became deeply enamoured of each other.

As ill-fortune would have it, a Greek slave, also in the confidence of the Bey, and enjoying the post of pipe-bearer, became witness of the stolen interviews of the young beauty and her handsome adorer. Whether impelled by jealousy of Malek's good understanding with his master, or his still greater favour with his youthful mistress, does not appear, but Kloughi threatened to make known the intrigue. His silence was, however, purchased at the price of one hundred sequins per month, and matters went on apparently as before.

The state of bondage, however, in which he was kept by Kloughi's unfortunate discovery, at length

became intolerable to the haughty spirit of Malek, and after impatiently enduring it for a year, he resolved to put an end to his apprehensions.

A day came when Kloughi received a mortal blow from a yatagan, just as he was counting over his monthly bribe. Malek picked up and made away with the corpse, and thought himself safe from all suspicion. The next day he started off on a periodical round to collect taxes, in the name of the Bey, in some of the neighbouring villages, when a slave, secretly despatched by Zumla, overtook him with the information that all was known, and that the guards were at that moment in pursuit of him. Malek, acting upon this friendly intimation, took to flight, but was followed by the guards, who scented him by means of Zumla's emissary. With superhuman courage he defended himself against his numerous pursuers, and it was only after being badly wounded that he contrived to escape out of their hands.

It was at some distance from the spot that, faint with the extraordinary exertion to which he owed his safety, and losing blood rapidly, Malek was met by a Marabout of Algeria, who not only gave him shelter and protection, but nursed and cured him. As soon as he was restored to health and strength and was fit to travel, his generous host accompanied him to a spot a mile distant from his habitation, and there, with true Oriental hospitality, he placed

in the hands of his guest a purse containing twenty douras, and further, made him a present of a horse. He then threw round his neck a rosary,* and bade him God speed.

It is needless to say that the Arab charger's head was turned in the direction of the French outposts, and in a very short time it brought its new master safely within their protection.

Such were the incomparable warriors, fighting among the French men-at-arms, and stimulating them to increased energy by their valour and address, for the French soldier does not easily yield, in a contest where his reputation for personal qualities is at stake, and the French horsemen endeavoured not only to equal but to surpass their rivals.

To the Chasseurs Algériens succeeded the 1st Regiment of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, called into being by virtue of an official proclamation in November, 1831. This regiment consisted of—

1. A squadron of Chasseurs Algériens.

* The Mussulman has his rosary as well as the Catholic, and tells his beads perhaps as devoutly. His beads,—the old Saxon word for prayers, from the German "*Beten*,"—are not, however, the same as those of the Christians. They represent a series of pious ejaculations, comprising the various attributes of the Deity: thus, he says, as he tells each bead, "God is good," "He is great," "He is merciful," &c., "He loves his votaries," "He protects his own," &c. &c.; and the Mussulman like the Catholic rosary, is not a mere repetition, but equally involves a meditation which is thus measured and marked.

2. 300 men taken from various regiments in France.

3. 40 volunteers.

4. 20 men per squadron drafted from the 12th Chasseurs.

Formed in the first instance into four squadrons, this regiment undertook the whole service of the outposts, a service which till that time had not been performed by less than three regiments of equal strength. Without extra clothing, without shoes, in the midst of the rain and the mud, these intrepid fellows exhibited a discipline and a readiness worthy of experienced troops. We must not forget that in their Colonel, M. de Schauenbourg, an old soldier of the empire, a "*vieux de la vieille,*" they had a first-rate commander. With such a man, their organization could not but be perfect.

The brilliant encounter of El-Ouffia, in April, 1832, which took place only five months after the formation of the corps, may be considered the *début* of this famous regiment. It proved a dazzling success, and the complete organization of the regiment was followed up with so much determination that all difficulties were overcome, and in the following July it was eight squadrons strong. The battle of Bouffarik, fought on the 1st October, 1832, was a yet more glorious triumph. It would be interesting, did the limits of this work admit, to enter into the history of these engagements, which are highly interesting in detail, and form a glowing picture of

African warfare, but we can only briefly touch upon the salient points which mark the progress of the new corps.

The Franco-Arabian period of its existence may be said to be represented by the 1st regiment; it began in 1830, and terminated in 1834. In 1832 another regiment had been created, and in its turn represented another period of those military annals which mark the history of the African colony.

It was only in 1836, a year of repose, that all the means and appliances intended to bring it to perfection were experimented and improved. The uniform, the arms, the harness and caparison were subjected to trial, and were finally selected with due regard to the nature of the service required of this new cavalry, and to the description of country for which it was destined. The dress is now too well known in Europe to need that we should particularize, and as for the Arabs they have good reasons for recognizing in the far distance the sky-blue uniform of a troop of Chasseurs as it advances over the plain.

We pause again to note the battle of Oued-Laleg, fought on the last day of the year 1839, under command of Maréchal Valée. This splendid victory was signalized by prodigies of valour, and compensated for a check experienced by the French some time before on the same spot.

At Affrourd, in the spring of 1840, the 1st Chas-

seurs again charged the Arabs assembled at Bonoumi with irresistible impetuosity. In the same year this regiment acquired new laurels at Milianah and Medeah.

The characteristics of the 1st and 2nd Chasseurs seem to have maintained themselves throughout the existence of those regiments, each partaking of the nature of its founder and organizer, Colonel Schauenbourg and Colonel Létang. Impetuosity was the distinctive characteristic of the 2nd, and the various episodes which illustrate its history, testify more or less to the fact. If, however, it originally led them into acts which brought discredit on their ranks, they in the end nobly redeemed their position and vindicated their reputation.

Towards the close of 1840, the 2nd Chasseurs distinguished itself at Oran, where General de Lamoricière charging the enemy, and followed by his brave and dauntless men, sought to recover the body of Colonel Maussion, who had been slain at the outset of the battle, and succeeded in the gallant attempt.

Again at the battle of El-Amria the same regiment once more distinguished itself under the same General. Alas! how many young aspirants for fame who won their maiden laurels here, survived but to fall on the disastrous plains of the Crimea!

We cannot pass over the battle of Sidi-Rachet, where the peculiar qualities of the 2nd Chasseurs shone out with striking brilliancy. In 1845, all the

French cavalry was quartered together in the Kergenthal, at about a mile from Oran, and there was the 2nd Chasseurs snugly barracked in a separate turret, called "Pavillon de la Mosquée." It was a perfect palace, luxurious as a court of Al hambra, offering scenes such as the imagination pictures to itself when reading the fabled wonders of Arabian poetry. Colonnades of sculptured marble, pavements of alabaster, galleries painted and arched; in short, no device of art, however costly, which could be employed to enrich a Moslem palace, was wanting in this Eldorado. In addition to this, the ingenuity of the French soldiers, and especially of a captain of the 2nd, named Joly, a clever painter, had illuminated some of the walls with subjects taken from the religious and military history of France. St. Martin, St. Denis, Charlemagne, and St. Louis figured in the panels and upon the windows, and the whole was characterised by a stamp of originality which struck and interested Horace Vernet himself, when passing through Oran to study the neighbourhood of Isly.

It was in the spacious quadrangle, surrounded by these chambers, so romantic in all their oriental detail, that the men used to meet to talk over their exploits, past and future, and to build up their fairy structures of hope and anticipation. It was amid these palaces, and in a country and climate offering scenes so unlike the matter-of-fact realities of life

that these ardent youths sought to catch from each other fresh inspiration at the recital of adventures which alternately made the air echo with laughter, and animated the hearers with breathless interest. It was here that one night, in the midst of cheerful intercourse, the horrifying news of the catastrophe of Sidi-Brahim suddenly arrived, the signal of a campaign in which the 2nd Chasseurs were destined to play so important a part.

But for the clear foresight, calm courage, and energetic presence of mind of de Lamoricière, directing the indomitable bravery of the Chasseurs, it would have fared hardly with the French on this memorable occasion. Abd-el-Kader had chosen his time with such consummate address, and had advanced his projects with so much precaution, that almost any other General would have been fatally surprised, and if so, his troops would probably have been either discouraged or vanquished. ...

The campaign of 1845 was not marked by any other striking incident; and up to 1847 the history of the 2nd Chasseurs may be narrated in a few words—it was continual war. The 3rd and 4th now took an active part in the important operations which followed, terminating as they did in the submission of Abd-el-Kader. The exploits of these two regiments are as well worth preserving as those of the others, and the whole experiment, which has been crowned with signal success, may be considered as

a new era in the history of the cavalry of the French army.

It is remarkable to what an extent circumstances, apparently fortuitous, have seconded the movement. On the very soil which first suggested and first received this body of cavalry, is found a breed of horses exactly suited to their need. Notwithstanding the inferiority of its size, the horse of Africa possesses qualities found in no other race. This noble charger is equally well suited to carry the carbinier and the cuirassier, those powerful horsemen and those agile combatants, who have done honour to the uniform of the Hussars and the Lancers, and are equally qualified to act either as light or heavy cavalry.

The *Chasseurs d'Afrique* were seen charging in line at Oued-Laleg with Colonel Bourjolly, carrying batteries at Isly, under Colonel Morris, foraging on many notable occasions under Colonels Létang and Tactus. Thus they united in themselves the two distinct elements of European cavalry.

Besides this, the African war demanded long and painful marches, under a scorching sun, in pursuit of tribes continually flying before them, and an adversary remarkable for his bravery, but who made war after the manner of the Parthians. This cavalry had thus to deal with an enemy often impregnable, and the sturdy horse, laden with an enormous weight of rations and forage which he was

necessarily forced to carry with him, through a country almost destitute of resources, always discharged his difficult task creditably.

The Spahis were called into being at a later period than either of the newly-created troops we have just been considering. They were for the most part composed of natives, and were commanded exclusively by French officers, from the grade of captain upwards. The Spahis have only one ambition, and this has been sometimes justified by the success of their exploits: it is, to be able one day to look upon themselves as the rivals of this splendid corps.

The observation of Marshal St. Arnaud after the battle of the Alma is not forgotten by the French army:—"I shall ever regret," said he, "I had not at hand my two regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique."

It is to the inventive genius of the Duke of Orleans that we owe the creation, in 1838, of the Chasseurs de Vincennes, or *Chasseurs à Pied*. The special organization of this body, the extraordinary range of their weapon, and its great precision at a distance of 600 metres,* render them better suited

* Marshal Saxe, a high authority in war, was in the habit of saying that, to kill a man in battle, a man's weight in lead must be expended. A French medical gazette, published at Lyons, says that this fact was verified at Solferino, even with the recent great improvement in fire-arms. The Austrians fired 8,100,000 rounds. The loss of the French and Italians was 2,000 killed and 10,000 wounded. Each man hit cost 720 rounds, and every

even than the Zouaves for mountain warfare. The Zouaves are not more skilful in diversion, nor more expert in scaling rocks, nor more rapid in their incursions, than the *Tirailleurs de Vincennes.* Besides this, there is not a hill-top so lofty that the balls of a Vincennes rifle would not dislodge a Kabyl from it. These shot almost rival those of the artillery in the distances they traverse. The value of the *Chasseurs* was proved beyond a doubt in the gorges of Oued Foddha, where they successively swept the Kabyls from off the sharp rocks they occupied in front of the French column. Their courage was apparent at Sidi-Brahim, where, having defended as long as their ammunition lasted, a Marabout fort, in which they were entrenched to the number of eighty, they cut their way to Djemma-Ghazonal through a compact mass of 6000 Arabs, and arrived there contesting every inch of ground, always surrounded, and having no other protection than their sharp double-edged sword-bayonets. They started eighty in number, determined fellows as they were; they arrived—reduced to sixteen! Even after the siege of Rome it was difficult to estimate what might be the important

man killed cost 4,200 ounces. The mean weight of a ball is one ounce; thus it appears that on an average 272 rounds were required to kill a man—700 shots may, therefore, be fired before one man need be struck, and 2,400 before he need be killed. This calculation certainly seems to make the chances of war less formidable than we are accustomed, at first sight, to suppose.

influence of the ten battalions of French *Tirailleurs* in a European battle.

Besides these special corps, nearly all the infantry of the French army has participated in the Algerian war. There are few regiments which the African sun has not hardened to fatigue, and inured to all the privations of military life.

CHAPTER II.

CAMP LIFE.

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CHAPTER II.

CAMP LIFE.

INTRODUCTION.

It was one of those calm, cloudless summer nights which announce a brilliant morrow, when we retired to rest, intending to rise with the dawn, to pay our visit of investigation to the Camp of Châlons.

We threw up our window, which commanded the "Rue Large," appropriately so named—for, indeed, besides the charm of its antiquity, it may claim to be a magnificently-proportioned street—and gazed out into the still air. Although wanting nearly three hours of midnight, the old city of Reims was already wrapped in repose, and with the exception of a belated wayfarer here and there, the inhabitants of the dwellings around us were as silent as the feathered denizens of those noble old trees skirting the broad arcaded streets, and forming its leafy boulevard.

The antiquated gables and wattled façades, broken

by carved oak panelings, opposite, exhibited their picturesque detail and elaborate workmanship athwart the deep tint in which they were mantled, while their dark shadow, cast obliquely across the pavement by the moon's unobscured disc, repeated their quaint and characteristic *silhouettes* with the magic of nature's master-touch.

The venerable Cathedral, invested as it were with a proud consciousness of its magnificence and vastness—associated so intimately with the history of its country—the witness and the scene of its most gorgeous pageants, seemed still to preside over the slumbers of the ancient city, and in the solemn stillness, uttered its deep-toned warning that one quarter of an hour, and then another, was added to its age, and had gone to mingle with the past.

It was impossible not to be impressed by the elevating and imposing influences of the scene before us, and difficult not to contrast it mentally with the noise and revelling, the riot and intoxication, the brawling and contention disturbing at this very hour the gas-lit streets and showy squares of our own manufacturing towns. We closed our eyes and transported ourselves in imagination to Birmingham; we pictured to ourselves episodes of life we had once witnessed and studied there; we saw the determined efforts of Policeman 104 D to break up a drunken fray, and to protect a reeling wife from the blows of

her less besotted but more furious husband, who seemed (for the moment) to have forgotten his solemn vow before his minister to love and cherish her. We saw by the glare of the large lamp, which lent its attractive brilliancy to the gorgeous gin-palace, a small tattered boy, pale and hungry, cowering on a door-step, dragged out by a female fiend, in human shape, whom he still called "mother," and brutally thumped, because she could only find one halfpenny in his ragged pocket to spend in liquor! We saw immodest young women romping with rough lads, now laughing, now fighting or pursuing their way down dark, forbidding lanes to carry on their shameful orgies; we passed by penny "gaffs" and low concert-halls, where the educated and enlightened youth of both sexes, sprung from the street-population of Birmingham, amid loose songs and indecent jokes, were indulging the tastes which the nineteenth century policy of their superiors has implanted with such ready success. We saw all this, in the mirror of our memory, and much more we would fain *not* have seen, and when we opened our eyes once more on the peaceful moonlit streets of Reims, we asked ourselves if we could be living in the same age and in the same world.

We had not long been asleep, when the footsteps of mine host, mounting the oaken stairs, and then his powerful knuckle on the door-panel startled us from our dreams, with the not very welcome

announcement that it was time to rise. There was no resource but to make up our minds to the disagreeable plunge.

The first faint streaks of red were tinging the horizon—for the day was about to break in all its glory—when the jingle of the horses' bells bespoke their approach, and soon the clumsy vehicle was standing before the *Porte Cochère*. It looked like the coupé of a *diligence*, cleverly amputated from the colossal machine of pre-railroad memory, and there was even the *cabriolet* on the top, to carry the passengers' luggage; an entrance could be effected either by lifting the apron in front, or by opening the door behind, and as there were two benches, it might be made to accommodate four besides the Auriga. This functionary informed us that he had a way of sitting on a board fixed in front, which enabled him to carry as many as six besides himself. He allowed that his *voiture* was not exactly handsome, but then it was *so* convenient.

The greatest advantage we recognized in this queer piece of waggonry, was its open front, which certainly secured a fine view of the country.

"*Bon voyage!*" shouted mine host, as, rolled up in a large wrapper, we snugly ensconced ourselves in a corner; and he removed his *casque à mêche*, for the poor fellow had evidently turned out of bed, and doubtless meant to turn in again and finish his night. The *voiturier* cracked his whip, and as we

facetiously replied, "*Bonne nuit ; dormez bien,*" the conveyance rolled away, and we pursued our road towards the *barrière*.

The old fortifications were soon left behind, although of no mean extent ; and then came one of those interminable avenues of poplar trees which seem to grow longer the further you advance, and which are so inimical to the picturesque. Through its intervals, however, might be seen peeps of very pleasing landscape. In the foreground were the golden corn-fields, sparkling with morning dew, and sprinkled with the scarlet coclico, divided, by a mid-distance of carefully cultivated patches of every hue, from the blue misty hills, whose faint verdure was broken now by a mountain-stream, and again by a winding road, while the white villages seemed to nestle in the valley at their feet.

The peasants were already at their labour, women as well as men, reaping, mowing, gathering in, and even ploughing, here with oxen, there with horses. We passed several quiet little hamlets, crossed a richly-planted vine country, and when about half-way, we stopped at a solitary roadside house to change our cattle. A grey-haired peasant woman, assisted by her husband, came out and unharnessed our jaded steeds, for the road, though hard and smooth, was hilly ; she seemed quite handy at the work, and did her part with more activity and *savoir-faire* than the man, who grew impatient at every buckle he had to

unfasten, and was liberal with his "*sacré nom d'un tonnerre*," &c.

On we jogged, only stopping once or twice, "*pour faire souffler les chevaux*," but as it was generally opposite a *cabaret*, it might also be *pour arroser l'homme*. Occasionally we met a beast of burden, laden with panniers, or bright brass milk-cans, and caparisoned with a net-work of blue or scarlet tassels about his face, led by a damsel in *sabots*, with a broad straw hat. Sometimes we observed traces of a gipsy encampment, or a travelling detachment of that nomad race, and sometimes a vehicle laden with garden produce, drawn by a mule and accompanied by one or more simple-looking peasant women; the whole group composed and coloured as if on purpose to challenge the pencil of an artist, and yet not one of them, from the quadruped upwards, appeared in any way conscious of the graceful picture they would compose.

We crossed a picturesque little wooden bridge, leaving behind several far-famed vineyards; on our right we perceived the little town and environs of Sillery—a well-sounding name in the ears of the experienced connoisseur; and we drove past the extensive possessions of "Monsieur Jaqueson," who, in the face of his tell-tale patronymic, disclaims all pretension to English descent! He has married an English lady, however, and is looked upon here as a *millionnaire*.

At length the country became less undulating,

the soil more chalky, and at the next turn of the road a vast plain lies before us; we can even discern the canvas hillocks and long low buildings which stud its surface; and our conductor raising his whip in that direction, exclaims, "Voila le camp!"

Evidences of agricultural toil and remunerative fertility still accompany our advance; hedge-rows of walnut-trees, orchards, and farm-yards skirt the road right and left; pasture land, on which browse frequent flocks of sheep, with their vigilant canine guardians, diversifies the scenery. Near them are little wooden huts on wheels, not unlike bathing-machines, for the shelter and protection of the shepherd, who, by-the-bye, in this province has the reputation of not being always so intelligent as his dog. The proverb says—and proverbs generally take their rise from noted facts—"*Quatrevingt-dix-neuf moutons et un Champenois font cent bêtes.*"

There is abundance of game in this neighbourhood; hares and "other small deer" continually crossed our path, and every now and then the rumbling noise of our char-à-bancs would put up a promising covey of young partridges, for we were forestalling the opening of the shooting season. The officers enjoy the privileges of the sport whenever they please, and frequently avail themselves of this amusement to vary the comparative confinement of their position here.

And now we are approaching our destination; we

begin to count the snowy sugar-loaf cabins which, small as they seem, our driver tells us, are intended to shelter eight or ten of our species, for since the last improvement in camp-life, the number has been limited to that. Soon our road is crossed by the railway bridge, and a train goes whizzing and fizzing over our heads. The centre arch of this bridge forms the entrance to the Camp of Mourmelon.

THE CAMP.

"On ne nait pas Capitaine; on le devient; non, par les livres, mais en campagne; non dans les plaisirs d'une vie douce, mais sous les armes et sur la neige, en souffrant le froid et le chaud."

MONTECUCULI.

"Atque animos aptent armis pugnæque parent se."—VIRGIL.

WE will pause a moment before we enter, and cast a retrospective glance upon the historical, geographical, and geological characteristics of the ground consecrated to the school of training for the future heroes of France.*

* It is worth while to cast our eye upon the picture with which Gibbon furnishes us of a Roman camp, which he describes as presenting the appearance of a fortified city.

"As soon as the space was marked out, the pioneers carefully levelled the ground and removed every impediment that might interrupt its perfect regularity. Its form was an exact quadrangle, and a square of about seven hundred yards was sufficient to encamp 20,000 Romans, though a similar number of our own troops would expose to the enemy a front of more than treble that extent. In the midst of the camp the prætorium, or general's quarters, rose above the others; the cavalry, the infantry, and the auxiliaries occupied their respective stations; the street

The Camp of Châlons was never intended to furnish a specimen of the appliances and attributes of war, still less as the theatre of military pageants to gratify public curiosity. It was proclaimed from the first by the chief of the empire to have a serious purpose, and it was organized under the conviction that camp service alone afforded the legitimate means of hardening troops to the chances of war, of testing their powers of endurance no less than their aptitude at manœuvres, of giving them confidence in themselves, and supplying them with a thousand facilities which can only be acquired by practical instruction and personal experience.

"The Romans," says Montesquieu, "regarded peace as a period of leisure, to be taken advantage of for perfecting themselves in the science of strategy, and war, as the time for applying the instruction they had acquired during peace." The number of fortified camps which pervaded the territory of the Roman Empire, throughout its length and breadth,

was broad and perfectly straight, and a vacant space of two hundred feet was left on all sides, between the tents and the rampart. The rampart itself was usually twelve feet high, armed with a line of strong and intricate palisades, and defended by a ditch of twelve feet in depth as well as in breadth. This important labour was performed by the hands of the legionaries themselves, to whom the use of the spade and the pick-axe was no less familiar than that of the sword or *pilum*. Active valour may often be the present of nature, but such patient diligence can be the fruit only of habit and discipline."

seem to indicate that even that naturally martial people considered camp life necessary to make men soldiers, and to maintain their martial spirit.

In the modern history of France, Louis XI. was the first king who saw the advantage of a camp of instruction, and he therefore created one in Picardy in the year 1479. In the following year he pursued his theory by establishing a second at Pont de l'Arche. Louis XIV., in 1698, organized a camp of 60,000 men at Compiègne. In 1727 Louis XV. created one at Richemont, on the Moselle, and in 1732 installed another in the same locality, which he placed under the command of Maréchal de Belle-Isle. In 1739 the same monarch formed a third at Compiègne; and in later times still, we find the Camp of Boulogne in 1804; that of Lunéville, ten years later; then those of Helfaut, of Satory, of Satonay, and finally that of Châlons, though why it is called of "Châlons" we cannot exactly explain, seeing how great the distance is from that city; nearly six leagues to the north of it.

There are at the present moment 30,000 men encamped on the plains of Mourmelon; not exactly on the site, but on the same plateau, to the north-west of the spot to which history points as the camp of Attila. In a few short weeks the regiments which have been quartered here during the four best months of the year will have been removed for the most part, and only about 6,000 men will remain for the

winter months. The *levée du camp* takes place about the middle of October, and next year the troops sent thither will be altogether changed.

History tells us that it was on this plateau, in the very heart of France, fertilized by the Marne and the Aisne, that was fought the famous battle in which Actius cut to pieces the countless army of the fierce Attila and his Huns, better known as the "Scourge of God."

Sidonius Apollinaris, Idacius, and Cassiodorus, point out the plains of Châlons, between the Vesle and the Suippe, at the junction of the roads of Toul and Verdun, as the theatre of this bloody engagement. Only one historian, Isidore of Séville, differs from this opinion, and considers that the locality of this memorable battle was a spot about nine miles from Châlons, on the field of Mauriac.

It was on these almost boundless and undulating plains (on which, in our own time, have sprung up the tents of the Imperial Camp,) that the civilization of the world was saved from the invasion of those vultures of the north, who, seeing the Roman Empire at its last gasp, rushed upon it by thousands to devour the rich and beautiful provinces of Southern Europe. The French soldier has fixed his habitation and cultivates his graceful flower-garden upon the very ground profaned by the powerful but ruthless barbarian who boasted that when once his horse

had passed over a spot, it was thenceforth barren ground.

The Camp of Châlons reposes on that vast table-land which develops itself between the Marne, the Aisne, and the valley of Argonne. This country, consisting of a considerable extent of plains, watered by several small streams, is particularly favourable to the purpose to which it is applied. It is exactly suited to receive a large assemblage of men, and to admit of the execution of military manœuvres, which are by no means impeded by the patches of fir-woods planted around it, and serving as a very efficient shelter. Geologically, it consists of a shallow stratum of dry earth upon a subsoil of chalk, and yet it is surprising to observe with what success its meagre advantages have been improved. Established between the rivers Suippe and Vesle, which mark its eastern and western extremities, the camp is on the north bounded by the Cheneu, and the line of demarcation on the south is represented by the road which unites the town of Châlons with the village of Suippes. The tract of country appropriated to this purpose is fifty miles in circumference. That it is not altogether barren we may infer, not only from the success with which it has been cultivated, with a view to ornamentation, but from the fact that the Emperor has now as many as nine dairy farms situated about the camp, and that the butter produced from their pasturage, and

known as the *beurre de l'Aigle*, with which symbol, as appears, it is stamped, not only supplies the Imperial household, but is in great request in Paris, where it is sold at a very high price.

The land has of course been purchased by Government, and it is remarkable that so large a tract of country could have been found unencumbered either by forests or habitations, especially as it is skirted by well-wooded districts; and although it does not enjoy quite so undulating a surface as Aldershott, it is covered with rich verdure, and by no means presents that black, bare, colourless, and trackless aspect which imparts its peculiarly dreary character to the English camp. The latter is moreover continually covered with clouds of fine sand in dry weather, converted into mud in the rainy season. There is also an equally fine black earth which blows over the men, and on field days they return home as if dusted over with gunpowder.

A dozen years ago the whole extent of country round Mourmelon, which we now see instinct not only with agricultural and architectural evidences of the presence of man, but with the stir and activity of military life, was an unnoticed and apparently unknown desert, boasting at most a few patches of tardy cultivation, to serve the needs of the scattered hamlets which had gradually formed themselves on the borders of the streamlets which intersect it.

The soil possesses one very important quality, to

which we must advert in passing; it is so absorbing, that after the heaviest rains it is found to be dry again within a very short time. There are occasional mists, but they are never very heavy nor of long duration. Towards the approach of autumn, bivouac fires are lighted along the whole line by eight o'clock in the evening.

The men are well supplied with water. At the time of the sudden desiccation of the Cheneu, on which they principally relied, the Emperor ordered wells to be sunk to the number of three to each regiment. Water was found of excellent quality at twelve, eight, and sometimes even at six feet below the surface, clear and bright in quality, and very different from the brown unpalatable liquid to which the men are condemned at Aldershott, and which, strange to say, is the only water within any reasonable distance of the centre of the camp.

But we drive in at the gate, and the first impression produced upon us is, that we have suddenly arrived in a new world. An extensive town lies scattered before us, of an order and a description totally different from anything which can be presented under other conditions of life. The approach to it, through which we now progress, is in character with it, and some new object engages our interest at every step. On one of the highest points, on the north-west of the plateau, lie the hamlets of Mourmelon le Grand and Mourmelon le Petit, about a league apart.

The old Roman road leading from the ancient city of Rheims, or Reims, to Bar le Duc, crossing the Cheneu, divides these little scattered villages, both of which skirt this stream. The Cheneu takes a bend to the west, of about two leagues, which has been adopted as a line in the planning of the camp, the centre of which is close to Mourmelon le Grand. It was doubtless in order to take advantage of this supply of water that the spot was thus chosen. On the right we have a little *cabaret* of two stories, whose signboard, exhibiting a collection of triangular white patches, puzzles us for a considerable time; at last we discover they are intended to intimate that canvas is the order of the day, and that the host especially recommends himself to those "who dwell in tents." On the left we have the *séchoir* of the military laundry, where soldiers' garments, blown into absurd and fantastic shapes, are fluttering in the breeze. We meet a party of soldiers under the guidance of a sergeant, provided with baskets and proceeding to market to cater for their company; a heavy waggon, of military build, driven and accompanied by artillery soldiers, next passes us; men differently accoutred, according to the arm to which they belong, are stirring in every direction, and there is a general appearance of life, animation, and business.

We pass a picturesque group of cottages, with a water-wheel, being part of the village of Bacône; close by this is a descending road leading to the

spot where the artillery are quartered, and we advance along a road hedged on either side with cheerful-looking buildings, evidently of recent growth, the owners of which have established themselves there not less with a speculative view to their own profit than for the convenience of the camp, for they offer all the attractions which can beguile the soldiers' hours of leisure and recreation. As we advance, the ground becomes more and more covered with pedestrians, and we find ourselves in the midst of the primitive village of Mourmelon le Grand. We have on our left the venerable grey stone spire embowered in trees; before us the broad road, where we meet foot-passengers, civil and military, mingled with beasts of burden and carts; on our right the busy market-place, the square in which it stands consisting of shops, restaurateurs, cafés, and "guinguettes."

We have but to cross this, and we find ourselves in the midst of the camp. We have on one hand whole streets formed by snow-white tents pitched with mathematical accuracy, but the stiffness of whose aspect is modified by borders of flowers and lawns of turf. We face the head-quarters, and turn towards the centre of the grassy plain where they stand. The Imperial *quartier* is pointed out to us, and near it the *baraque* of the Commander-in-Chief, Maréchal McMahon; before each is a guard of honour. The Maréchal's is a long one-storied house,

apparently of oak; before it, is a light verandah, the windows open to the ground, and the brown colour of the wood is relieved by the bright hue of the flowers planted round it. The Maréchal is popular in the camp, and possesses all the qualities of a great General. He is indefatigable in his military duties. He is about every morning by five o'clock, in the midst of the men, and the greater part of the day is occupied by his military avocations. He sets apart a couple of hours each day for reading, and military tactics are his favourite study. He rides over to Juvigny every afternoon; Madame la Maréchale occupies the Château there, at a distance of about twelve miles. His habits are remarkably active, and he would tire out many young officers in the saddle.

One Sunday, during our stay, took place the presentation to the Maréchal of the much-talked-of sword of honour. The deputation arrived in the morning at Mourmelon, and passed the earlier part of the day in visiting and examining the camp, afterwards dining with the Maréchal in his *baraque*. A considerable number of officers of distinction were present, and among them were some remarkably fine martial-looking men. General McMahon himself has a commanding person, and looks every inch a soldier. He is said to be under fifty, but has the appearance of being considerably older. His hair is thin and grey, and he has a fine open forehead, a florid complexion,

and small but intelligent and acute grey eyes. There is a severity of contour about the chin which bespeaks considerable decision of character. He mentioned to a member of the deputation the singular fact that he had never known an hour's ill health. The officers invited by the Maréchal to meet the deputation arrived in brilliant style on their Arab horses at the appointed hour, and when all were seated, perhaps a more dazzling sight could scarcely be witnessed, for it could not be forgotten that all these decorated officers, with orders and distinctions glittering on their breasts, were no fops or mere men of pleasure, but veteran heroes, who had worked their way to glory, who had braved danger and risked life, before victory and honour had crowned their exploits. After the banquet, the company were conducted into another saloon, and there the sword, enshrined in a conspicuous place, became the subject of conversation no less than of admiration to all present. It was passed round from hand to hand; examined, discussed, commented upon, and the gentlemen of the deputation were called upon to explain the emblems, ornaments, and even to give a reason for its shape. This led to a discussion on Irish weapons, ancient and modern, and other national questions, in all of which the Maréchal, who never for a moment forgot his Irish descent, appeared intensely interested. His conversation was animated, and he cordially and frankly expressed his satisfaction at the

honour thus courteously conferred upon him. The evening passed away agreeably and rapidly. At ten o'clock—for early hours are necessarily observed in the camp—the deputation rose to take leave of the Commander-in-Chief, and retired to the tents prepared for them. They must have gone away impressed with a very favourable idea of camp life. Not only was their reception most hospitable and gratifying, but the weather was delightful, the sky exhibiting one cloudless expanse of blue.

The Imperial Quarters are close by, in the most elevated spot in the camp, and consist of six or more elegant but not very solid-looking buildings, within a planted enclosure, fenced round with trellis. The centre erection is in process of demolition and improved reconstruction. One night, on the occasion of the last visit paid by the Imperial party, the royal residence caught fire, and though it was extinguished before any serious damage occurred—the wardrobe of the young prince and the properties of the nurses being all that was destroyed—it was deemed prudent to obviate the recurrence of the accident by the adoption of a less inflammable material, at least for the sleeping apartments. It is said that the child was lifted out of his crib by the Emperor himself, who carried him, without awakening him, into his own room.

This portion of the building consists of a triple pavilion, the centre one being loftier than the others,

striped blue and white, with gable-ended overhanging roofs; on either side is a dark oak *châlet*, raised from the ground, and entered by a short flight of steps. One of these contains the dining-hall, and the other the billiard and reception rooms. When guests are visiting the Emperor, the evening is passed in playing various games; beyond these, are two more "*pavillons*," and behind are guest-chambers, offices, apartments for the Imperial household, and the attendants of guests.*

The Emperor frequently pays short visits to the camp, and on the first occasion, when both he and the Empress made it their residence for three weeks, the satisfaction of the neighbourhood, civil as well as military, was unbounded. Their arrival was welcomed by the rapid erection of a series of triumphal arches, and a small tri-coloured flag was spontaneously hoisted on the pinnacle of every tent and every roof throughout the camp; the effect was as novel as striking, and the attention proved most gratifying to the Imperial visitors.

The soldiers used, in narrating the details of the

* The Queen's Pavilion, at Aldershott, is a flat, ugly, square building, and if not "void," is certainly "without form," or architectural beauty. It stands on a somewhat elevated site, and overlooks the whole of the camp. It is not very richly furnished, but within has a certain air of "royal pomp and ease." The sleeping department of the domestics consists of a single dormitory, divided into seventeen cubicles, each forming a small and complete bed-room in itself.

visit, to take particular delight in repeating that Her Majesty "ne s'est pas ennuyée du tout." Rides, and drives, and walks round and about the camp with her ladies and visitors formed her morning occupation, while the evenings were passed in *parties de jeu* and in visiting the *Théâtre du Camp*, where a very creditable *troupe* performs, when the soldiers themselves do not take their place, and whither the Emperor always resorts for a longer or shorter time each evening during his residence at the camp.

If the weather be warm he will saunter about the grounds which surround his *baraque* with some of his Generals, and occasionally smokes a cigar. Sometimes he will beckon some of the private soldiers to him, and will make a *partie de jeu* at some game of skill with them, taking care to let them win, and paying his losses in cigars.

The Emperor's visits are naturally enjoyed by the soldiers, being looked forward to as events bringing with them not only extra occupation, which perhaps alone would not be very acceptable, but extra indulgences and gratifications. Thus, in respect of diet, the ordinary fare of the soldier is *arrosé*, during His Majesty's stay, by a *litre de vin—de Champagne bien entendu*,—so that whenever the flag is hoisted on His Majesty's *baraque*, no fewer than thirty thousand *litres* of wine are being distributed daily. Again, on the field-days which occur during His Majesty's stay—and these then generally exceed the

ordinary two a week—medals, crosses, decorations, and distinctions, according to merit, are awarded to the troops; and as these sparks of glory are eagerly coveted by the French soldier, the occasions on which they may be obtained are always welcomed. They seem to compensate for the additional time given to service and labour in furbishing up and then re-cleaning all the paraphernalia of war brought into use for these turn-outs, and about which the French military discipline is very minute and punctilious. On the 15th August last, when His Majesty passed his *fête* at the camp, after solemn High Mass celebrated in the field, at which all the troops assisted, the Te Deum was sung by hundreds of voices, accompanied by a numerous orchestra of brass instruments and drums. The effect was most magnificent.

It is not unusual for the Emperor to saunter down, undistinguished by any external mark and unattended, into the village, where he seems to find entertainment in observing the doings of the Champenois of Mourmelon, in their domestic and commercial transactions. His Imperial Majesty's late visit, and the military inauguration of his *fête* there, have done much for the celebrity of the camp. What his innovations and improvements in a military point of view have effected for the reputation of the French army, as an army, in the eyes of rival nations, it does not remain for us to observe; all Europe has noti-

fied the various and important changes conceived and worked out by Napoleon III. during his several sojourns at the camp, in the social position of the soldier, the encouragement offered to his military aspirations, the organization and classification of the army, and the manœuvring of the troops.

His presence there, indeed, while it has tended eminently to increase His Majesty's popularity with that important body, representing so large a proportion of the element to whose suffrages he owes his position, has had a long-cherished object in view—viz., to test the value of a number of military experiments, and to modify their operation according to the impression they might produce upon him, when practised on an ample scale, and with all the facilities and appliances afforded by the very complete Camp of Châlons.

No one has, perhaps, ever so closely studied, so thoroughly appreciated, or so completely understood the genius of the French soldier as Napoleon. No phase of his character has been lost upon his observant eye, and, with that decision of mind and intelligence of purpose which have proved the distinguishing characteristics of his policy, he has not only resolved, but succeeded in seizing upon, and turning to the best possible advantage, every approach by which the French soldier is accessible.

He may be said to have, by this means, insensibly but firmly, wound himself into the affections of the

French army, and the men are, perhaps, themselves —as individuals—hardly aware how much attached they are to him.

His position among them—at once the goal of his desires and the security of his throne—possibly of his dynasty, Napoleon has known how to attain with an unobtrusive but not less unerring aim; and, having attained, he grasps it tightly, but without any visible effort.

He has discovered that the French soldier has always a heart somewhere, that he is impressionable even to sentimentality, and that with him tradition is the "plus belle moitié de sa vie." The French soldier has abstract thoughts and feelings wholly unknown in the English army; he lives in the past and in the future even more than in the present, both as regards his own and his country's history.

"Ah, madame!" said an old Frenchman once to a young mother, who was proudly exhibiting to him her infant son—"Ah, madame! quelles responsabilités vous avez devant vous dans l'avenir de ce petit être. Ce sera à vous d'influer sur sa vie entière dans ce que vous ferez pour lui pendant son jeune âge ne perdez pas cela de vue." And he repeated with emphasis the suggestive counsel, "*Donnez lui un beau passé! Donnez lui un beau passé.* Ah je vous en prie."

"How very French!" we hear some Englishman exclaim, and we echo the observation; it *is* French

all over; for it is not confined to the venerable lips which uttered it, it is the feeling of a French mind —of all French minds, and the soldier understands it as fully and as practically as the man refined by education. The "*Passé*" of the French soldier finds an echo in the words—Marengo, Wagram, Austerlitz, Eylau.

Starting with this sentiment in full vigour, we may form some idea of the enthusiasm into which the French soldier may be worked, by recalling to him the traditional glory of the army of which he is proud to form part. We can also understand his desire to belong to those corps whose names have been distinguished, whether for the part they have played in history, or the dignity of position that has always been accorded to them. Thus it would never have done to abolish the Royal Guard without substituting for it the Imperial Guard; and in every change the army has undergone, it has been equally politic to respect this sentiment, and to feel the ground before declaring the innovation as established.

The French soldier will bear a great deal of petting without being spoiled; he is used to it; indeed, he almost expects it. He is so much what the French call a *bon enfant*, that he does not take unfair advantage of the consideration shewn him, and the indulgences accorded to him, and he will do a great deal for the sake of being approved by his superior

officers. He knows not what it is, abjectly to fear those placed over him; there is—and we have enlarged upon this when speaking of the French officer—always a good understanding, a reciprocal sympathy, between men and officers which places them on a peculiar footing with regard to each other, which is scarcely understood in England.

The Emperor is, therefore, always welcomed with manifest demonstrations of affection when he appears, as he continually does, in the marché, the theatre, the village, or the church, and he always finds some little pleasant observation to make, which adds not a little to the gratification which this evidence of confidence inspires.

The distribution of medals, orders, and decorations by the Emperor's own hand, on the last occasion, was a most happy idea, and the impression it has left upon the men is all that could have been desired; their eagerness to come in for some of the distinctions awarded was very great, and officers and men shared alike the enthusiasm with which they were received.

The Prince Imperial made his *début* very early in camp-life, and if it be his father's wish to see him popular with the troops, he finds no difficulty in furthering that object.

The French soldier is invariably fond of children, and we can scarcely be surprised that the Imperial infant, surrounded as he is, by so many prestiges,

should make rapid progress in the favour of the men, to whom he chats with grace and affability.

He is a handsome, noble-looking boy, interesting in every way; very intelligent, and eminently martial in his small tastes. One of the soldiers told us with great amusement, how, some time ago, his Imperial Highness, who had already attained the "*galons*" of *Sergeant*, had been *cassé*, and reduced to that of *Caporal*, because he had been disobedient to his mamma. He added, he believed his pay was occasionally stopped for insubordination!

The little Prince trots about the camp in his Corporal's uniform, on a miniature pony of great beauty. He has a stud of four such, all of peculiar breed, and three carriages are appropriated to his use. His nurses are always in attendance upon him, unless when on horseback, and then a superior officer has the honour, and the responsibility, of the charge.

One day, last year, when he was riding out thus escorted, a soldier's son—a little *enfant de troupe*—watching his opportunity, with that address and precocious *finesse* peculiar to *la jeune France*, approached him, and drawing from his breast a paper, tendered it with a beseeching look to the young Prince.

The Mentor, perceiving the intention of the venturesome young petitioner, hastily interposed himself between him and his youthful charge, making, at

the same time, a haughty sign to the former to retreat; but it seems the little man has a will of his own, and whether his heart was touched by the appeal, or whether he considered it more dignified to assert his prerogative, he impatiently leant forward saying, "Si, si," and stretched out his small hand for the *placet*, which the other took good care to convey to him, and then, respectfully saluting, retired.

It is not for us to intimate that His Imperial Highness *could* not read the paper without help, and doubtless it was because he did not *choose* to open it till he reached home, that he simply passed it through his belt. However, he must have ended either by examining, or causing it to be examined, as the case was forthwith attended to, and the young Prince himself was commissioned to relieve the distress it made known.

There is a very good understanding subsisting between the Prince and the *Enfans de troupe*, which is wisely maintained, and when any little gratification is accorded them it always passes through his hands.

This miniature detachment forms an interesting feature in the camp. The *Enfant de troupe* is the pet and the adopted child of the regiment. They are the offspring of those soldiers who are allowed to marry—for there is but a limited number in each regiment—and, therefore, of the "*Cantinier*" and *Cantinière*. They are fed, clothed, and educated by

the country, and receive pay from the day of their birth. At the age of seventeen they have their choice, either to engage themselves in the army and receive the usual fee, or to be apprenticed to any trade or follow any occupation they may prefer. Nineteen out of twenty make their election for the army, and, indeed, all their tastes, instincts, and associations are military.

It is curious and amusing to observe the martial gait and military spirit of these Liliputian men-at-arms. As they walk along in their accoutrements, they look like finished soldiers of a smaller species, and assume a conscious superiority at the thought that they, at least, will never know the miseries and perplexities of an ordinary novitiate, or be tortured with derision at their awkward efforts to rid themselves of their rustic uncouthness, or be bullied with practical jokes such as are passed upon the raw recruit.

Yet, although thus prematurely initiated, they are by no means devoid of the graces and playfulness of childhood, and enter with hearty good will and agility into all bodily exercises and boyish games. We saw one party of them playing at leap-frog, while others were diverting themselves with nine-pins and marbles, all wearing their uniform.

A new measure is spoken of as likely to be adopted, which, while it will bring these little men prominently into notice, will contribute essentially to fortify the already vigorous constitution of the

French army. From the age of ten and upwards, all the *enfans de troupe* are to be provided with miniature guns, proportioned to their size and their strength, and they are to be drilled and instructed in the management of arms, the same as the regular troops. Fencing and the use of the bayonet will also form part of their education. They are, however, not to be trusted with cartridges, and are only to simulate firing, for fear of accidents. Thus practised till the age of seventeen—the period of their entrance into the service—these young men will bring to the ranks a primary military education already perfected, and will naturally form a nursery of promising *sous-officiers*.

The fact of the Emperor's having chosen this spot for the celebration of his last *fête*, and the military inauguration the anniversary there received, has brought all its capabilities, attributes, and characteristics prominently forward, and has called public attention, with a new impetus, forcibly to the investigation of all that is going on there. The Emperor has been making good use of his time during his unusually prolonged visit to the camp this year, and numerous are the modifications and improvements he has introduced in almost every department of the service, to say nothing of the impulse always given to the efforts of the men, and even to the genius of their commanders, by the Emperor's presence.

We have spoken of "*Cantinier*" as male and female, but this is rather entrenching on the ground of military *argôt*, of which, by-the-bye, there exists as complete a vocabulary as that contained in M. Vidocq's *Dictionnaire des Voleurs.*

The "*Cantinier*" is simply the husband of the *Cantinière*, for it is *de rigueur* that she should be married, and that her husband should be in the regiment to which she is attached, and as there are generally about six *Cantinières* to each regiment, there must necessarily be somewhere within it, as many *Cantiniers.* Often these *sposi obligati* are "*de la musique,*" but they are generally men sparingly endowed with character, of which their more spirited half possesses the larger share, and, as the wife is by far the more important personage of the two "*au régiment,*" they sink proportionably into the insignificance, and must needs suffer the disabilities, inseparable from a false position.

If a *Cantinière* lose her husband, she loses her place also; it becomes, therefore, indispensable she should replace him as soon as possible, for she is generally unfitted by her habits from beginning life again in any other capacity, and would not willingly change her profession. She is, in theory — and for the most part, also in practice—a woman of irreproachable character, and though on familiar terms with the soldiers, she knows how to make them treat her with proper respect. Her prices are tariffed,

and her wares subject to surveillance, which she occasionally eludes; but most of them are conscientious in this respect, and deal out both quality and quantity in the same measure in which it is meted to themselves.

The office of the *Cantinière* is a distinctive feature in the French army; we look for her with interest when a *bataillon* is marching past us, if only through the streets of Paris. She is generally a smart little body when young, and the costume she wears, though so striking to an English eye and so hybrid, has much attraction, especially before the wearer is advanced in years, as it is calculated to set off even a moderate allowance of beauty.

In camp life, however, the *Cantinière* becomes an object of real and serious utility; she is, to a certain extent, the *Sœur de Charité* of her detachment: and when required to nurse the sick, she exercises her task with efficiency and fidelity. This is all that is *required* of her: but instances have occurred where the military tastes she naturally acquires have been co-existent with energy of mind and vigour of body, and where the combination has resulted in converting the *Cantinière* into a real "*piou-piou.*" During the first Empire, when soldiers were taken anyhow and anywhere, it was not difficult for a woman, who had address enough to avail herself of the facilities afforded by the circumstances of the country, to slip in and engage herself as a fighting-

man. As an instance among many, we may mention one which was disclosed in a recent trial before the tribunals of Paris.

The usher of the court having called out the name of Herrewegen, the appeal was responded to from the *banc des accusés*, by a tall, stout, dark-complexioned woman, having a remarkable decision of character expressed in her countenance.

"Your calling?" said the president.

"Ancien Militaire," was the reply.

"Cantinière, you mean?"

"No, M. le President, I was at first soldier, then Corporal, in the 12th d'infanterie in Belgium, where, for acts of bravery, I was decorated with the 'Croix de fer.'"

Mr. Flaumann, solicitor of the accused, explained that his client, Marie Lombard, now Herrewegen, was, in 1830, married to a Belgian Sergeant, whose company was shut up in the citadel of Antwerp. No one could penetrate into the place; but Marie was determined to see her husband, and accordingly disguising herself in a military equipment, she thus contrived to pass the gates. She then contracted an engagement for two years, and so far distinguished herself during this time, that she was advanced to the grade of Corporal. In 1830 she was stationed with her regiment before the village of Bercham. A decisive action was fought with the Dutch troops, who had taken refuge within the place.

The manœuvre required was, to make forcible ingress into a country château, all the issues of which were barricaded, and whence a murderous fire was being poured on the assailants. The Captain had been killed. The brave Belgians hesitate. Marie Lombard starts forward; she attacks the doors with blows from the butt of her musket, breaks it open, throws herself within, followed by the remainder of the regiment; the village is soon taken, and the success of the battle decided.

On another occasion, near Louvain, in the midst of an engagement, a case of powder ignites and explodes, overturning by her side several of her comrades; the rest take flight. Marie, unmoved, rushes into the midst of the fire, and withdraws the wounded, administering to them the most suitable remedies.

However, the sex of this intrepid woman was liable to discovery. After two years' service she therefore denounced herself to the Colonel, who appointed her "cantinière," and she remained six years attached in this capacity to her husband's regiment.

The details we have cited, and other acts equally striking, obtained for Marie Lombard a public reward—the iron cross—with which she was decorated. The "brevet" which accompanied it was produced, and was made out under the bizarre nomenclature of "Le Sieur Lombard Marie."

After quitting the service, the courageous Marie had the misfortune to lose her husband, and found herself reduced to an insufficient military pension as her sole means of subsistence. Two years since she re-married, her husband being an honest workman; she has since become infirm, and poverty tempted her to commit a dishonest action.

While in an omnibus she appropriated a lady's purse; and being charged with larceny on the spot, she energetically denied it. But the stolen purse was found upon her, and the coins it contained having been further identified by the owner, there remained no doubt as to the guilt of poor Marie, who was condemned to one year's imprisonment.

Women are, naturally, not encouraged in the camp; we speak of such as have a legitimate right to be there—for as to camp-followers, *et id genus omne*, their presence is in France perseveringly discountenanced. Only a very limited number of men are allowed to marry in the French army; a private soldier must have the consent of his Colonel, and a *dot* is required with the wife before the marriage can take place, and even then a married soldier cannot have his wife with him, unless she hold some official position, and these being limited to the offices of *cantinière* or *blanchisseuse*, they are not very easy to obtain. When, however, this is the case, a separate domicile is accorded to the *ménage*, and that most objectionable, and we are sorry to say

unseemly, huddling together of five or six families in one hut, where they are only divided by a low partition, as at Aldershott, is unknown in France. Indeed, the scenes which take place in our own camp, in these teeming receptacles, and the immorality and licence to which such a system gives rise, must be seen to be believed.*

* So loud has been the outcry against this overcrowding of families, and so mischievous have been its results, that an improvement has been begun in some of them, and a division of one hut among four, instead of among six families has been tried; but even under these, the most favourable circumstances under which the interior of the family hut has been distributed, one important oversight disfigures the improvement. The partitions, if indeed they can be called such, are wholly ineffectual for any purpose of privacy, and although the evil is diminished in degree, it remains the same in kind. Why, we may perhaps be permitted to ask, cannot four stout wooden partitions, reaching from floor to ceiling, be fixed in such a way as to shut each little family within its own domain? Surely one small room is little enough for a whole family, without the superfluous annoyance of the publicity to which their daily lives are thus subjected. Of the demoralization necessarily consequent on such a plan we have already spoken; and, indeed, it is too obvious to need any further comment.

THE TENTS.

"Multos Castra juvant."—Hor.

"Universa quæ in quoquo belli genere necessaria esse creduntur, secum legio debet ubique portare, ut in quovis loco fixerit castra armatam faciat civitatem."—Vegetius.

In front of the *Quartier Général,* and not far distant from the site of the imperial residence, stands upon an elegant estrade covered by a baldaquin supported on light columns, the camp-altar, upon which the weekly celebration of that grand and imposing function, *La Messe au Camp,* takes place.

"Figurez-vous," exclaimed our informant, "trente mille hommes! qui sont réunis tout autour;" and he proceeded, with characteristic enthusiasm, to describe the magnificent sight in all its details—the decoration of the altar, the previous days' furbishing and burnishing and polishing, to get their accoutrements into primest order for the occasion, the assembling of the troops, the various regiments advancing with their bands, and—commanding all—the

echoing of trumpets, the roll of drums, and the roar of cannon, when the elevation of the Host sends all present on their knees. "Il faudrait voir ça, voyez-vous, pour en comprendre toute la beauté. Pour ceux qui y assistent pour la première fois, cela fait beaucoup d'impression." But of this we shall have to speak in due time and place.

Having thus described the central point, or *Quartier Général*, we will proceed to the general disposition of the camp.

To the infantry is appropriated a vast *plateau*, devoid of vegetation over the greater part of its extent, except near the quarters of the second division, where some small plantations of firs supply shade and coolness. This plain is about equally divided into tents and *baraques;* the latter have been recently increased with a view to the winter encampment, and a new town, as it may almost be termed, has been added to that portion of the camp on which the *baraques* are built.

In fact, but for their practical utility in accustoming the men to the most inconvenient incidents of camp-life—and, of course, this is the primary object of the establishment of the camp—we suspect the tents would soon disappear; their discomfort as dwellings is great, and there is no doubt that a long residence in them would prove prejudicial to health. The experience the men have had of them has, however, been of great service in shewing how

such abodes may be improved, and how their disadvantages may be modified under circumstances which render their employment compulsory.

There are two kinds of tent used at Châlons; the elliptical, appropriated to the infantry, and the conical, to the cavalry.

The tents of the infantry are placed in rows, at regular intervals, at right angles to the "front de bandière." To each company is allotted two rows, separated by a road about five paces wide. The space left between every two companies forms a lane or street about two paces wide, while that which separates the battalions from each other is a noble road, as much as twenty-four paces wide. Each company is supplied with two tents, under which are deposited the arms of the soldiers, called "*Manteaux d'armes.*"

The tents of the officers of the company and of the officers of the *Etat-Major,* situated in three parallel lines, are separated from those of the soldiers by the "Grande Rue," and, in the case of the *baraques,* those of the officers are built on the grand line belonging to each regiment. The officers' tents stand north and south, while those of the men face east and west. The same rule has been observed in the erection of the *baraques.*

There is a new description of circular tent in use at Châlons, possessing an ingenious apparatus for ventilation. A ring, about eighteen inches in cir-

cumference, holds the canvas; to this is linked a flat piece of wood, circular in form, and rather exceeding the ring in diameter. To the centre of this wood is fixed the pole which supports the tent, and the opening thus left round the pole serves as an escape for the air within the tent.

Various experiments have been tried with the view to render these canvas habitations as perfect as possible; among these is the additional width which has been given them in proportion to their height, and which, undoubtedly, enables them effectually to resist the strong winds which occasionally sweep over these plains.

We now come to speak of the interior disposition of the tents, and shall begin with those of the infantry, one of which we will enter. We have already said they are elliptical, and one advantage of this form is that they are not quite so difficult to ventilate; a second, that the men can stand erect in any part of them; and a third that it admits of a shelf being slung longitudinally across the upper part. Such is the neatness and order with which every thing is stowed away, that, although inhabited by ten and twelve men, who have but this small accommodation for all their belongings, there is an air of cleanliness, tidiness, and even comfort, within these temporary habitations.

The ground is perfectly white under our feet, and neatly ranged against the canvas all round, are

rolls of bedding stowed away for the day. These consist, first, of a *paillasson*, or straw mat, about six feet long and eighteen inches wide, narrower at the feet than at the head; then comes a loose paillasse or bag of straw, within which is a sack, serving for sheets, and a pair of blankets. At night these are unrolled and laid down, with the feet converging towards the centre.

The men begin to find the nights cold with this quantum of covering, and yet they also intimate that the atmosphere is sufficiently warmed by the animal heat of the men. This arrangement has undergone considerable modification of late: in the year 1843, and before the experiment had been tried, sixteen—and as the minimum, fourteen—was the number prescribed by the *instruction ministerielle* to occupy each tent. In 1857 M. le Baron Larrey —a man not less distinguished by his medical skill, than for the close attention with which he has studied all that concerns the hygienic condition of the soldier—pointed out the great evil of this close packing. In consequence of his representation, the Emperor, one evening, visited the tents after the men were inclosed for the night, and was so convinced of the good sense of M. Larrey's observations, that he immediately ordered the number to be reduced to eleven or twelve at most, for the infantry; and to eight, or, in case of necessity, ten, for the conical tents of the cavalry. A further

improvement has since been adopted, and now the number is scarcely ever more than eight or nine, even in the infantry tents.

The one we entered was evidently intended for nine, and the beds were disposed three on each of the three closed sides, there being none on the side used for ingress and egress; for though there is an entrance on either side, they are seldom both opened, unless occasionally, for purposes of ventilation.

M. le Baron Larrey is no friend to the tents, and points out, first, their stifling temperature, either during very sultry weather, or when shut up for the night with all their occupiers sleeping within; secondly, the difficulty of ventilating them; for, as he justly observes, if the two opposite entrances are left open simultaneously, the violent draught which must result would prove highly prejudicial to the inmates; thirdly, the close proximity in which the men must be placed, owing—*not* to the limited size of the inclosure, which, in itself, is small enough—but to avoid placing any one under the openings. At these points, the straps by which the tent is closed, become, during wet weather, nothing better than gutters, and it is very difficult to buckle them closely. A moveable window has been introduced, but the experiment has failed, and these tents, known as "Tentes Godillot," have been found in no way preferable to the others.

"Les hommes," says le Baron Larrey, "sont

dans une véritable infection nocturne, attendant avec impatience l'heure de se soustraire à ce foyer impur."

A further difficulty is their perviousness to moisture; in rainy weather the water is found to penetrate the canvas, wet the interior, especially the bedding, and cause damp and cold. In short, the canvas, once wetted, contracts in drying, so that it can never again be satisfactorily closed.

It has been suggested that tents made of stout cotton material doubled, or canvas lined with a cotton cloth, would remove these objections. The question of the improvement of tents is one which has long seriously occupied the attention of the authorities, and in September, 1858, His Excellency the Ministre de la Guerre sent into the camp, in order to try their various merits:—

4	(elliptical)	officers'	tents	of ordinary tent cloth.
2	,,	,,	,,	of cotton cloth.
2	,,	,,	,,	of sack-cloth, 3-thread.
8	,,	soldiers'	,,	of cotton cloth, 3-thread.
3	(conical)	officers'	,,	of sack-cloth, 3-thread.
1	,,	,,	,,	of cotton cloth.
6	,,	soldiers'	,,	of sack-cloth, 3-thread.
7	,,	,,	,,	of cotton cloth.

The trial of these was made in the infantry and cavalry respectively, and the result, as regarded both forms, was that, owing to an orifice in the

summit, the ventilation was very superior to that under the old system. The doors were wider, and were found to close more perfectly. The tents made of cotton cloth, whether conical or elliptical, were found perfectly water-tight; those of thread and cotton mixed, admitted the wet slightly. They are also more cheerful and pleasant to inhabit, more elegant in form, more roomy, and more impervious to fog. The system of closing was greatly improved by the substitution of cotton for leather straps. The latter becoming slippery when wet, stiff when dry, continually causing the canvas to tear, and thereby making inlets for the rain. If the whiteness of their exterior is objectionable from their dazzling effect on the eyes, on the other hand, it makes them much lighter within.

It is expected that whenever a new supply of tents is issued, they will be very superior to those now in use.

In some of the tents we observed that a trench about eighteen inches in depth, and the same in width, had been cut transversely across the tent, and, on inquiry, found the men had had recourse to this ingenious contrivance in order to sit on its edges more at ease than squatted like tailors on the flat ground. All they possess would seem to be stowed away in their knapsacks, which are placed on the hanging shelf above.

There is no doubt these very close quarters often

prove a source of inconvenience, and the feeling of annoyance to which this gives rise, it would seem, is not always suppressed. After a few minutes' conversation with an intelligent young Norman private, who did the honours of his tent with great politeness, we discovered he had just been liberated from "trois jours de salle de police," in consequence of a *rixe* which had arisen out of this cause.

"C'est parceque je m'ai battu avec mon camarade," replied he, in semi-*patois*, in answer to our query as to how he had deserved to be placed in durance vile. "Lui me donna un coup de coude que je ne tardai pas à lui rendre,—bien entendu,—et puis,—ma foi!—une fois commencé, ça a marché, ça a marché si bien, qu' à la fin des fins nous avons tout démoli . . . . tout," repeated he, shrugging his shoulders, adding with ludicrous *naïveté*, as he concluded his confession, "la place n'était plus reconnaissable."

"Ah! mais c'est égal; demain je m'en dedommagerai," he continued, his face brightening up, and he rubbed his hands and seemed ready to skip for joy. "Demain j'ai mon congé, je m'en vais au pays, il se pourrait même que j'y reste." He went on to tell us that he had served two years of his time, but that his father having died since he left, he had applied for leave to return to his widowed mother as "soutien de famille," and that, therefore, unless in case of war, he should not be recalled.

A new and apparently very improved form of tent has been introduced to notice in England by Captain Rhodes; though it has not yet been adopted, it seems to obviate many of the objections to those hitherto used. It resembles the tilt of a waggon, and if we want information as to the degree of advantage with which it may be used, we have but to apply to the gipsies, among whom it has so long been in vogue; their travelling habitations being often constructed so as to admit of lifting off the upper portion, which, when placed on the ground, serves as a shelter during their sojourn in any one locality, without the trouble of unpacking and pitching their tent. Those proposed for the use of our soldiers have chimneys for purposes of ventilation, made of the same cloth as the rest, and the windows are also an advantage not possessed by those of the ordinary form.

While on the subject of tents, we may mention the *tente-abri*, an accessory of war peculiarly French, and invaluable in the colonies of Africa. It has not been employed at Châlons—notwithstanding the simplicity of its construction and the rapidity with which it can be erected—for it would be totally insufficient to protect the men against cold and rain.

The *tentes-abri* have been pitched only once or twice, to initiate the troops into the method of setting them up. Each of these tents is divided into five portions, of which the staves form two; these are carried by five men, who, on receiving the

word of command, unfurl the canvas, button the several portions together, and in two or three minutes a perfect dwelling stands before them.

The *tente-abri* has been supposed by some to be the invention of the Zouaves, but it is, in fact, to the 17th Light Infantry that the idea is due. The original notion was to unsew their *sacs de campement*, or substitute for sheets, and by tying them together two and two, to form a drapery which, stretched on poles, constituted an improvised tent. The experiment having been found to succeed, Colonel Bedeau from this hint organized the new kind of shelter, and caused it to be adopted throughout his regiment. Other regiments soon followed the example, and hence the *tente-abri*, which in rapid operations and vast plains offers a valuable resource.

The advantages of the plan were sensibly felt in the Crimea, where, by its means, the French soldiers were under cover at once, while their allies were compelled to bivouac *sub jove frigido* amid all the discomforts of that inclement climate.

There is much in French tactics the practical nature and utility of which is plain, and French soldiers are trained to activity and expedition by every possible means.* Thus, a part of their instruction

* Our men seem to gain something by emulating our Gallic neighbours, and now perform this operation with wonderfully improved rapidity and exactitude. A short time since, on a field-day at Aldershott, when the Commander-in-Chief and the late la-

consists in embarking a regiment on board a man of war, and when men and baggage have been put into boats, conveyed on board, and stowed away—every detail being fulfilled with as much accuracy and punctilio as if preparing for a real departure, which doubtless they suppose it to be—the order is given to disembark, unload, and return to quarters. Model railway carriages are similarly employed, and are practised with in the same way as the ships, the order being in this case to prepare for a land journey. These helps, like others we have borrowed from our French neighbours, will, doubtless, some day come into use in our own army. The Musketry Manual, which contains the entire code of instruction at the Hythe School, is only a somewhat amplified translation of an official work of the same character issued by authority of the Ministre de la Guerre in 1848.

Rapidity in evolutions is justly looked upon as the great element of success in all strategy. The late Emperor of Russia knew the value of it, and appointed measures to secure perfection in this respect among his troops. One day a grand ball was given at the palace of Moscow: the revelry was at its height; suddenly the trumpet sounds to horse, a

mented Prince Consort were present, the tents were ordered to be pitched at Beacon's Hill, and nothing could exceed the agility displayed by the men in the fulfilment of this order; no Zouave could have executed the command with more spirit, or have carried out the detail with greater perfection than these men, who, it ought to be recorded, were of the 16th, 20th, and 45th of the Line.

look of consternation passes over every face, and there, too, might be seen

> "Cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
> Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness,"

and those who but now glanced incredulously at each other feel that it is no mistake; the command is issued, the boom of a gun is heard in the distance, then three rockets ascend in succession, sharp, swift, and sure, into the clear star-lit sky, and in less than half an hour the gaily lighted hall is deserted, and fifty thousand men are assembled on a specified point, all perfectly equipped.

Now the camp covers a space of perhaps ten or twelve versts—say nine miles; we may imagine the vexation of the young officers, who, having just prepared to enjoy a night of pleasure, fond themselves suddenly arrested in the midst of their polking and waltzing, flashing repartee, and vivacious flirtation, (with other equally national and rational amusements), torn from their promising position and bewitching partners, to mount in hot haste, and exchange the dazzling ball-room for the dark, chilling field, and the elevating dance for the practice of a long series of manœuvres which was to last till eight o'clock in the morning; it was the episode of Waterloo repeated, only without its romance and its bloodshed.

Concerning organization, the very soul of success, for which the French are so eminently remarkable, we

may quote the correspondent of the "Daily News," who, in a letter dated Beyrout, 18th August, 1860, remarks—

"All the arrangements of the French commissariat are admirable; every possible contingency is foreseen, everything is in its place. What a contrast to the way in which the English troops disembark. French soldiers landing at Beyrout might imagine themselves at Marseilles or Toulon. The men are in excellent condition, well equipped, and have a martial air:" and he adds, "Their politeness towards all persons visiting the camp has excited great admiration and satisfaction."

Another writer, addressing the "Times" from Civita Vecchia, under date of October 7, says—

"The French troops expected here have all arrived. A part of the division were landed on the 3rd by the steam frigates 'Asmodée' and 'Christophe Colombe,' and by the transport. To-day two more steam frigates have anchored in the port, and are landing troops and stores; a third ship is in sight. You cannot form an idea of the activity and cheerfulness of these brave soldiers. Scarcely had they landed than they began to prepare their breakfast. The ground occupied by them was quickly covered with cooking kettles; fires were lighted, and in a very short time a savoury smell was perceived, announcing that breakfast would be the first manœuvre."

To return to Châlons,—the cavalry is encamped

on the right of the first division of infantry, on the banks of the Cheneu, and on the road to Mourmelon le Petit, on a portion of the plain denuded of vegetation, but enjoying the advantages of a peculiarly dry soil.

The conical tent is the one appropriated to their use, and it appears only to offer one advantage over that of the elliptical form, inasmuch as it is less liable to be blown over in stormy weather. It does not, of course, admit of the addition of the shelf with which the other is fitted, and presents this further disadvantage, that, except in the centre, the men cannot stand upright in it, and are therefore almost continually obliged to have recourse to a stooping position.

How they contrive to stow ten men, with the saddles, harness, &c. of their horses, within this narrow compass must remain a mystery alike to those who have and those who have not seen it. These additional 'impedimenta,' however, from which the infantry are exempt, by no means contribute to the purity of the atmosphere within.

The proximity of the horses, picketed in two long lines covered with straw along the whole course of the tents, is a further drawback to the salubrity of the position.

Thus, the French cavalry at Châlons are all quartered under canvas, and have no better representative of the spacious and costly West Cavalry Bar-

racks recently erected at Aldershott, at an expense to the country of which it is frightful to think, when we reflect that they are the offspring of one of those jobs which can give little satisfaction to anybody besides the contractors. "It is almost incredible, too, that these expensive buildings should have been erected on a site where there is no drinkable water to be had. 'For the first day or two,' says a cavalry officer who speaks from experience, 'we thought the pipes might be foul, but there has now been plenty of time for them to clear, and yet there is no alteration in the taste or colour. It is wonderful,' he continues, 'when such sums were to be squandered on these buildings, that no one should have thought of inquiring how the water was to be supplied; but it is a bungle and a blunder from beginning to end, and the accommodation itself has never been considered. Who will believe that each barrack is too large for one regiment, and not large enough for two? and so on throughout the piece.

The cavalry horses at Châlons, which are small but most beautiful specimens of the Arab race, are all bred in, and imported from, Algeria, and during the whole campaign no protective shelter has been deemed or found needful for them. When the rain has poured down very heavily they have had a horse-cloth thrown over their backs, otherwise they have stood night and day exposed to all the rain, fog, and inclemency of four months of unprecedented

wet without appearing any the worse for it. No other horses, it is said, could have survived it.

The French soldier and his horse live on the best possible terms, and that their attachment is mutual is evident to the most casual observer. The camp does not, perhaps, afford a more curious or amusing spectacle than those little episodes which may continually be witnessed among the cavalry tents.

While visiting these, we stood for some time out of sight, watching what might literally be termed a conversation between one of these sagacious quadrupeds and his master. Fearing to disturb the dialogue, we avoided too near an approach, and thus did not catch the words of the very animated communication the *troupier* was addressing to his beast; but the gestures used by the former, and the almost conscious expression which lighted up the eyes of the latter, and imparted to him perhaps the more intelligent aspect of the two, were comical beyond description.

When the discourse was over, the *cavalier* administered to his equine confidant a kiss on either cheek, which he appeared as cordially to return, and then clasping him round the neck, he lifted himself from the ground, climbed on his back, and went through a game of romps, which both appeared equally to enjoy.

Not far from this group was another soldier, passing a leisure half-hour likewise in the society of his four-footed comrade. After stroking, and patting and

talking encouragingly to him, he took a handful of corn out of his pocket, and after letting the horse taste it, held it a little way from him, till he followed him several times round his tent, at length stopping opposite the door, and endeavoured in the same way to entice him within; but whether he did not consider the tenement a desirable residence, or whether he perceived the impropriety of the step, it is impossible to say; certain it is, he declined the proffered hospitality, and on a second attempt being made, cut the matter short by turning round and walking back with dignity to his place. The comrades within at once applauded the superior good sense of the horse, for one of them exclaimed: "Allons donc; si tu crois que la tente est là, pour les bêtes tu n'as pas besoin de changer de place avec ton cheval, qui a bien plus d'esprit que toi."

A *brigadier*, to whom we addressed ourselves, declared that the intelligence and docility, the gentleness, and, at the same time, the spirit of these horses was a positive marvel. "Ils nous arrivent tout dressés; il savent déjà leur besogne, il n'y a rien à leur montrer." There is no training needed, they know their work by intuition.

Speaking of the characteristics of these Arab horses on their native soil, the Prince de la Moskowa observes: "I took the first opportunity of trying my seat, and was fortunate enough to succeed passably well; but it was some time before I was accustomed

myself to these little barbs, so hardy, so lively, and so active are they. One is taken by surprise at the petulance of their movements. If the legs of the rider press their sides, they start off with such rapidity that one might fancy they were running away; in a difficult, even a dangerous pass, it is useless to attempt to guide them—they leap like mountain-goats—they only advance by curvettings or by starts; but, notwithstanding their impetuous movements, they carry their rider admirably, and without ever making a false step. I am bound to confess, however, that at first one cannot help being struck with the independence of pace which distinguishes them, and to which the horses we ride in Europe have never accustomed us."*

Notwithstanding the attractive and valuable peculiarities of these native horses, it appears, however, that in their own country, Arabs of distinguished position are often to be seen mounted on asses. But then we must remember that there, not only the horses, but likewise the asses and mules, are of a superior race, and are also far better treated than those of Europe; indeed, this is doubtless one cause of their pre-eminence; in fact, they are used by the highest personages as hacks for the road and for travelling from one place to another. The Chiefs only use their horses as chargers; it is possible, in-

* For a graphic description of these coursers, see Scott's Talisman, ch. 22.

deed, that they consider them of a race too noble to be employed in any ordinary service. Their success in battle depends much on their horses, which are so intelligent that there is no difficulty in training them to any manœuvre. They are so sure-footed that reins are almost superfluous; and, once started off into a gallop, it is customary for their riders to throw them on the horses' neck; they then seize their gun with both hands, removing it from the saddle-bow, where it is placed, and wheeling it round above their heads, stand up in the stirrups. Thus placed, with the body motionless, they take aim and fire. The movement is exceedingly graceful, and nothing can partake more thoroughly of the unaffected elegance of nature than the suppleness of limb of these Arabs, when they throw aside their *burnous* over the shoulder as they fire, and with a skill peculiar to themselves, impart a semi-rotary motion to their horses, which stop short, and rear, passing into the second line to re-load. Their fire is, however, very uncertain, and therefore not dangerous or much feared.

It is a curious fact that, in action, if a mounted soldier happens to drop, his horse will return—as a matter of course, without his rider,—and resume his place in the ranks. From all we have said it will be understood that the French cavalry must have undergone a considerable improvement since the days of Louis Philippe.

Near us were three *cavaliers*, busily preparing and donning their accoutrements; their horses were brought out, were saddled and bridled, and on either side were slung respectively their litter and forage in two spherical bundles, of straw and hay, enclosed in nets. At length all the preliminaries appeared to be completed, the men mounted their horses, and stood ready to start. Seeing this, the *brigadier*, who was still in conversation with us, begged to be excused, as he was "*de service*," and advancing to the three mounted soldiers, proceeded to examine every portion of their own and their horses' equipments: nor was he content till he had walked several times round them, giving the forage-bag of one a twist to make it hang at the same height as the other, ordering a buckle to be tightened and a rein to be shortened—and satisfying himself that every particular of military punctilio was duly fulfilled. We learned that these men were going to relieve guard at the Maréchal's quarters, where they would have to remain until the same hour next day.

The cavalry have only of late been supplied with these Arab chargers; they are, of course, expensive at the outset, but in the end prove less costly than the French horses formerly in use, as they are more hardy.

These spirited creatures thoroughly enjoy the field-days, and it is a beautiful sight to watch their action in a manœuvre; there is a gracefulness and agility about them which seem to be directed by a

superior degree of sagacity and command of themselves; doubtless it is in some measure to the precision of their movements that is to be attributed the rarity of accidents upon these occasions. It is well known that a field-day at Aldershott seldom passes over without one or more serious if not fatal occurrences. Here, it is stated that a casualty very seldom occurs, and there has not been one attended with loss of life since the camp was first formed.

It is only after scouring England, Germany, Switzerland, and the environs of Turkey, where a fine race of half-bred horses is to be found, that recourse has been had to the Algerian colony.

General Yusuf's recent return to Paris appears to have had for its object a conference with the Minister of War, and with General Fleury, as to the advantages of establishing in Algeria breeding-studs on an extensive scale. There have been three such depôts in the Franco-Algerian possessions since the year 1844, with a view to the production of thorough-bred horses, and these depôts have been lately considerably increased by the purchase of several horses belonging to the late Pasha of Egypt. They still, however, fall short of the needs of the colony. The object of the Duke of Malakoff is to restore the pure Arab blood in Algeria, and to make that colony the largest market in the world for traffic in horses.

A considerable number of fine, stout, sleek mules

are employed in the camp; these creatures are evidently well fed and cared for, and are mostly natives of the mountains of Italy, whence they are imported.

In summing up our remarks on the French cavalry, we may assert that the improvement in this branch of the service is marvellous. We most of us remember what was once the condition of the horse-soldier of France, and, forgetting that progress is the order of the day, and that that progress, especially where the Emperor has set his mind to work, is advancing at a rapid pace, we have not as yet realized to ourselves the fact that the cavalry of our neighbours is fast reaching perfection.

The Emperor rightly looks upon his cavalry as a most important element in the army, as well in general actions as on outpost duty, and he thinks it time to ascertain what is the utmost use to which it can be put. He has therefore been endeavouring to accustom the troops to the practice of evolutions similar in character to those of the artillery and infantry; and considering the difficulties with which he has to contend, as regards national and local peculiarities, the success already attained may be looked upon as pointing to an ultimate efficiency none would have expected to see attained.

We have spoken of the measures taken to improve the horses; we have to add that a new impetus has been given to the inventive genius of the nation by

suggesting as a matter of serious study a theoretical and practical improvement in the cavalry accoutrements, and the efficiency of the men.

The saddle and bridle of the horse-soldier, whether *Cuirassier* or *Lancier*, i. e., whether heavy or light cavalry, are no longer what they were; they now afford a help, and not, as formerly, a hindrance; we have but to observe the adjustment of the stirrups to note the increased ease and firmness of seat the rider has acquired, while he now, after the example of the Arabs, throws down the reins, and avails himself of both hands, whether to attack his foe or to defend himself; both lance and sword ought to be equally available to the horse-soldier.

The French have discovered that a part of their previous inferiority in the cavalry department was due to a system which, losing sight of individual training, only sought to perfect the corps *en masse*. The experiences of the Italian campaign afforded a practical lesson which the Emperor has since that time been diligently turning to account; and rightly supposing that he had hit upon the "défaut de la cuirasse," he has turned his attention to improving his cavalry by this single means. The result of the last few months' training is surprising. The Emperor himself is so super-eminent in the hippic art, that it is strange he should not earlier have desired to mark his era by working this particular element of his military strength; doubtless he will hence-

forth pique himself on the superiority of his mounted soldiers, and leave no effort unemployed to render them the noblest in the world. He has yet, however, to convince himself that agility, and not weight, is the great desideratum in a horseman, and then doubtless he will gradually abolish the Cuirassiers, and replace them with light cavalry.

M. le Baron Azémar, Colonel of the 6th Lancers, has just produced a work on the French cavalry, in which he shows how greatly the importance of that body is being felt in the French army. He dwells with pride on the exploits of the mounted troops led by Murat, Lasalle, Montbrun, and Bessières, and declares that Napoleon's star only grew pale from the moment his cavalry failed him.

The cavalry is, in fact, the complement to the infantry; the one completes what the other has begun. There can be no decisive result without cavalry. "If in 1813 I had had my cavalry," said Napoleon I., "I should have reconquered Europe."

M. le Baron d'Azémar is of the opinion of the Duke of Ragusa and the Duke of Elchingen, that the lance is the weapon of the Cuirassiers, or that, at all events, the first rank in every squadron should be provided with it. Marmont relates in his *Institutions Militaires*, that in 1813 several charges of Cuirassiers having failed before the Austrian squares, it occurred to the Commander-in-Chief to cause the cuirassiers to be preceded by the fifty Lancers

forming the escort of Général La Tour-Maubourg. They accordingly placed themselves in the front, and made an opening through which the heavy cavalry could penetrate, who destroyed all before them.

The main prestige of the French army consists in the conviction, continually impressed upon the minds of the men, of their invincibility. It was thus that Marshal Saxe sustained the courage of his men; and when, on the eve of the battle of Roucoux, he issued the following proclamation: "To-morrow there will be no field duty because of the battle, and next day there will be a grand *fête* to *celebrate the victory*," this great General was rewarded for his presence of mind, by the acclamations which echoed on all sides, and the army marched to the engagement with the certainty that they would win the day.

The Baron's object seems to be to prove that this portion of the army has degenerated of late years, for he affirms that in 1815 Wellington admitted its superiority. "You do not perhaps know," said he, "which is at the present day the best cavalry in Europe; I affirm it is the French. Since it has been my lot to sustain personally the effects of its daring and its perseverance, as at Waterloo, I have been able to judge of its capabilities, and I consider there is none that can surpass it."

This writer considers that the cavalry ought to be recruited at an earlier age than the infantry;

he says, and with truth, that a child cannot sit a horse too young, and that there are no horsemen like the Arabs, whose experience in riding commences often before the age of five years. He also advocates the selection of cavalry soldiers from among the inhabitants of districts where horses are bred, or at least where they are most employed, and he considers that it is highly important to cultivate a feeling of attachment between man and horse, which is rarely attained unless a man has been accustomed to horses from his childhood. The cavalry-horse should be the property of his rider; he ought to take an owner's interest in him, and feed and dress him rather with the instinct of attachment than from a sense of duty, or by way of conforming to the discipline that requires his attention. This can scarcely be expected of him if the horse be only nominally his—if he only ride it occasionally, and if he see the one he has specially chosen, lent to every raw recruit as he arrives, to teach him how to ride. The drilling of recruits of course imposes certain exigences, but it is never without a feeling of vexation that the "*cavalier*" sees his cherished quadruped serve to give the new-comers their rudimentary lessons; and his first care, when the horse returns to the stables, is to caress it, and to endeavour to console it for the indignity which he considers has been offered to his equine comrade. Often he has been known to divide

his ration with it, by way of a compensatory gratification.

There have been instances where horse-soldiers, promoted to the rank of brigadiers, have preferred retaining the horse they rode when private soldiers, to availing themselves of the right of choice even to possess one of higher value; and in like manner brigadiers promoted to the rank of "*marechaux du logis*" in another squadron, have been overcome with grief at being thenceforward deprived of their favourite horse.

It is not only at Mourmelon that the cavalry of France are being worked into shape; Saumur may at the present moment be considered a vast nursery for the training and education of horse-soldiers. Saumur has the appearance of a city dedicated unreservedly to Mars. Around and about, and within and without, we hear nothing but the report of the rifle, the flourish of trumpets, and bands of military music, and we see none but soldiers; soldiers on foot, and mounted soldiers, and chargers, without as well as with, their riders. *Bellum undique, et undique bellum!* and yet there is here a happy contrast as surprising as agreeable. The environs of the venerable old town, which dates its military occupation from the Druids and the Gauls, from King Pepin le Bref and Saint Louis, and whose antiquated "dungeon," as the castle is termed, frowns upon its white and cheerful habitations, are exceedingly pic-

turesque and pleasing. There is a calmness and repose in their aspect which is enhanced by the turbulence and tumult of war within the city walls; for although it is only war in embryo, still it has all the elements of the battle-field, and the latent spark is only too ready at any moment to break into a flame, even as the loaded gun in the hand of the marksman only waits to be discharged.

This contrast between rural tranquillity and military activity is a striking feature in Saumur, and it requires a mental effort to reconcile the antagonistic sentiments inspired on the one hand by the verdant fields and woody copse, bounded by the soft blue hills, and watered by the running brook, whose music is only interrupted by the noontide hum of insects, the distant lowing of cattle, or the plaintive tinkle of the sheep-bell borne upon the evening breeze—with the firing of cannon, the mustering of troops, the clash of arms, the roll of drums, and the bugle call.

Nevertheless, war in Saumur is the order of the day, and war must needs hold its court and give its festivals there. Accordingly, in August last, a military "Carrousel" was announced, and a countless concourse of people, eager as the French always are for military entertainments, crowded the seats erected in great numbers in front of the vast building, which resembled a spacious château rather than a barrack. Every external circumstance that could contribute to the brilliancy of the occa-

sion, favoured the military display about to take place. The site selected for the purpose was faultless; the blue sky formed a clear and glowing canopy, and the temperature, certainly above "summer heat," was freshened by a pleasant breeze.

The spectators were full of spirits and enthusiasm, and their manifest expectation of the grandeur of the evolutions they had come to witness, seemed to inspire all the warlike troop with new ardour and eagerness to exhibit their feats of prowess and agility.

They have been studying to attain, and may be said to have in a great measure arrived at all the power, all the grace, and all the elegance of the equestrian art, which consists in moulding man and horse into one being—a modern centaur—whose volition is regulated by one motive, whose actions are prompted by one desire, and whose movements are the result of one impulse—advancing, wheeling, receding by common consent at the word of command. This is the French cavalry-soldier of to-day, for this is what Napoleon III. has been aiming at making him; and indeed all who were present on this occasion must have been struck not only with the superiority of the riders, but with the intelligence, grace, and promptitude of their horses. M. Guérin, chef d'escadron, director-in-chief of the riding-school, opened the march. His ascendancy over the horse, rivals that of Rarey. There is no courser so restive,

so unmanageable, so shy, or, we may add, so vicious, M. Guérin does not master, at the same time attaching him to himself by an affection which nothing can afterwards destroy.

It was twelve o'clock in the afternoon before the proceedings opened, and when the "cavaliers" at length appeared in all the glitter of their uniforms, and bestriding with graceful ease their spirited chargers, the burst of admiration and applause was universal and simultaneous.

But what, perhaps our readers will ask, is a "Carrousel?" It is of course, we answer, a relic of chivalrous times and customs; but although the weapons of war have undergone a complete change, and the rifle and the cannon are comparatively new engines of destruction, yet the *fête* maintains its pristine character, and even imparts a chivalrous hue to the introductions of more modern times.

A Carrousel is an altogether military and equestrian *fête*; it is also a very musical one, and consists of a series of manœuvres, of involutions, and evolutions, in all of which the cavalry of France is day by day becoming more and more proficient. Without entering into a detail of all the movements performed on this occasion, we will endeavour to give our readers an idea of the programme, premising that these periodical exhibitions are eminently calculated to promote among the people a national feeling of interest

in military progress, and in the army itself a wholesome emulation and a desire to excel.

We have said that the "Ecuyer-en-chef," or Chef-d'escadron, opened the march. The first movement, or rather the Préface to the Fête, was what is termed the "*Salut,*" and is executed by a numerous *cortége,* who, preceded by the Ecuyer, advance and defile before the *Général Commandant de l'Ecole,* or Judge Advocate of the camp.

Every regiment in the French army was represented by the members of the *cortége,* consisting of fine young officers, thus paying their chivalrous homage to their superior officers, with a pomp and solemnity truly effective.

The great variety of uniforms thus brought into contact, formed a magnificent pageant, the effect being aided perhaps by the splendour of the summer's day, and might be looked upon as an epitome of all the French cavalry pressing towards the tribune, within which the General was seated, surrounded by all the civic authorities of Saumur; add to these official spectators, a galaxy of beautiful women in dazzling toilettes, brightening the scene and inspiring the men with new ardour to exalt their noble profession.

But French uniforms were not those alone which were exhibited there, the military school of Saumur affords a generous hospitality to young officers of all nations, and not only Englishmen, Spaniards, and

Germans, but even Persians, resort thither to complete their education in horsemanship, and to learn perchance later in life, how to charge their instructors.

To maintain the chivalrous character of the "Carrousel," the ladies take part in this modern tournament, and many of them, anxious to show they had not degenerated, rose at the firing of the great guns, and declared they loved the smell of powder.

The "*Salut chevaleresque*" over, this fine staff of officers proceeded to execute the most difficult feats of military horsemanship.

We could not but be struck by the difference in the feeling with which we witnessed the graceful display of these noble youths, offering us, with a disinterested emulation worthy of their profession, the spectacle of their glorious struggles, and the hackneyed exhibition of a vulgar hippodrome, where mercenary performers, jealous of each other's success, repay their hire by a representation of *tours de force*, often as unnatural as they are surprising.

The art of the horseman has here thrown a grace into all the figures we saw developed before us, under the names of *cercles, voltes, demi-voltes, quadrilles*, &c., but warlike impetuosity and vigour gave sinews to that grace.

As for the *Course des bagues*, of mediæval origin, its name sufficiently indicates the nature of this feat.

The rapidity and dexterity with which these modern *cavaliers* picked off the rings, was quite inimitable, and won merited applause. But a more difficult exercise still, and one attended with some danger, is that of "the heads;" this is also practised at Châlons, and consists of a race which may almost be termed a steeple-chase, during which, and whilst the horses are at their full speed, the rider is to pick up with his lance one particular simulacrum of head from among many scattered along the road he traverses. This feat requires considerable skill; if, after making the attempt—whether successfully or not—the rider does not rise again in his saddle with sufficient rapidity, he is thrown out of the stirrups and falls on the arena, and this, sometimes, with a heavy cuirass, hindering and cramping his efforts to rise. On this occasion, however, no disaster of the kind occurred, the men were wonderfully well up to the games, and in the "*Course des têtes*" the cuirassiers were as successful as the lancers.

The second part of the evolutions which was to close the "Carrousel" of the officers, came off with equal brilliancy. It consisted of the "*Rupture des quadrilles*," the *Doublé par six*, the *Doublé demivolte*, and *les quatre cercles en retraite en serpentine*; concluding with the general movement, which prefaced the final salute and the marching past of all the officers who had taken part in the pageant.

The excitement of the spectators was great during

the whole performance, and nothing could be more beautiful than the precision with which all the various movements were executed; the dispersing in so many exact lines; all moving off precisely at the same pace; the running together again and amalgamating in a nucleus as if drawn by a lodestone, or like globules of quicksilver, flowing into one mass—the variety of movements, now like a chain, of which the links drop asunder, to rejoin in the form of a cord of men and horses, which appear so firmly knit together that no power could separate them, and yet facile and flexible in their movements.

After the "Carrousel" of the officers occurred the *Carrousel de la troupe*, formed of non-commissioned officers, who come from the various regiments of the army to perfect themselves in horsemanship under the direction of a Captain. All descriptions of manœuvres were executed by these men. During the first part *La rupture de l'escadron, l'attaque des cercles, l'attaque des flancs, la croix de Malte, les huit cercles,* and during the second, *Les attaques successives en colonnes, l'attaque en Serpentine, la retraite en cercle, l'attaque oblique, la mêlée, la charge,* &c.; nothing, in short, had been forgotten that could exhibit the address of the riders or show off the action of their horses. The final charge was warlike and formidable, all these young soldiers throwing themselves into the vast arena with noble impetuosity

Only one accident—though fortunately it turned out to be only a false alarm—disturbed the proceedings of the day, and we retired deeply impressed with the efforts lying made by our foreign allies to perfect in every way the mounted portion of their army, no less than with the progress they are making with their infantry.

Towards the evening of this auspicious day, preparations for the races, arranged to take place on the morrow, were busily proceeding, and we visited the race-course of Varrains, an immense plain extending behind that long and beautiful chain of hills, surrounded by wind-mills, which announce, at some distance, the approach to the town of Saumerd.

The English do not intend to be left behind in these military manœuvres, and seem to have been stirred into something like vigilance by the activity of their neighbours; among other questions which have come under consideration, the condition of the cavalry-service is now occupying the attention of the authorities.

Our cavalry has hitherto been looked upon as consisting of two grand divisions—heavy and light; but, to the initiated, this broad distinction contained a complicated amount of sub-divisions and official classifications, and although the names given to the various regiments were Dragoons, Dragoon Guards, Hussars, Lancers, and Light Dragoons; the Lancers, which actually were Heavy Dragoon regiments, were

called, in official language, Light Dragoons, whilst some of the Heavy Dragoon Guards were, in point of fact, the lightest. These anomalies it was as well to remove, and if the cavalry establishment has not been fixed on a perfectly distinct footing, the re-classification has at least done something towards giving it a more consistent nomenclature.

The Bengal European Cavalry—or rather its remains—supplies us with three new regiments, which will make up twenty-eight Cavalry regiments of the Line, to be classed as twelve of light, twelve of medium, and four of Heavy Cavalry.

The question of weight is one which, essential as it is, we do not seem able to remove—perhaps, because it *is* so weighty. But when we know that the efficiency of a horse-soldier consists in his lightness and activity, his expertness and rapidity, we stand aghast at the fact that our lightest Hussars ride nearly twenty stone in the saddle. The kit and equipments are, of course, the ponderous adjuncts which impede the activity of the Light Dragoons. Now, the dragoon cannot dispense with his kit; all, therefore, that can be done for his relief is to reduce its weight as much as possible, and yet to take away none of the contents necessary to maintain unimpaired the usefulness of the "horse and his rider." This has been investigated, but the result has not as yet proved satisfactory. We have only succeeded in getting rid of a very few pounds, thus entailing

the necessity of employing a cart to attend each squadron. This is to be lamented, especially as the failure seems due to some blundering, when we consider how very much lighter is—without exception—the cavalry of all other nations.

The price of commissions in cavalry regiments is another grievance calling for redress; for, although the late Lord Herbert had endeavoured to effect an improvement in that respect, and had made a considerable advance in the right direction, the matter must be followed up if any permanent advantage is to be expected. The present outrageous cost of promotion, and the extravagant notions of expense which have hitherto characterized the cavalry, ought, by all means, to undergo reformation.

But to return to Mourmelon; the last grand day of the season of 1860 is worthy of mention. The weather was most favourable, and the troops seemed to derive fresh impetus and excitement from the clear sky and genial air.

The military *fête* was celebrated by the representation of the Bataille des Pyramides, and great attention had been bestowed on the "getting up" of the pageant, which was interesting in the extreme. Here, again (and this, be it remembered, was nearly a year previous to the Carrousel of Saumur, which we record somewhat out of place *àpropos* of horsemanship) the cavalry was called into effective play. It represented the enemy, and the manœuvring on both

sides was executed with a rapidity, decision, and accuracy of movement which it might not be amiss for our military men occasionally to witness.

This was the finale and the hit of the campaign; but there had been other field days which had left behind them no small *éclat*.

During that season, seventeen almost equally brilliant grand manœuvres had taken place, and a great number of ordinary field-days; besides these, several important experiments, of great practical utility to the troops, were tried, and that too upon a large scale.

The men were not found to have suffered either from fatigue or from the vicissitudes of the season, and the horses had escaped mischief. The Maréchal remained at his quarters till the last moment.

On the occasion of his *fête*—the day of St. Maurice, patron of soldiers—he gave a magnificent banquet at the Château de Juvigny, and received a complimentary address from the Municipal Council.

The Artillery is located in perhaps the most cheerful and attractive portion of the camp. The ground is undulating; the slender stream of the Chenou flows in front of their position, and while they are sheltered behind by an umbrageous copse, on the other side rises the primitive little village of Bacône. They have but slight protection, however, for their horses, which are natives of the country, and are by no means so well able to resist the effects of the weather

as their Arab rivals. During the camp season of 1860, it was found necessary, in consequence of the extreme humidity of the weather, to run up sheds in order to shelter them as well as circumstances would admit from the unusual inclemency of the season, but these structures are altogether insufficient as permanent stables, and since that time, further precautions have been taken.

The "équipages," guns, &c., of course remain exposed, it would not be possible to cover in, so large an expanse of ground as they occupy.

THE HUTS.

"Castra inimica vides."—VIRG.

WE have now pretty well explored the tents, and will repair to that portion of the field appropriated to the *baraques*, or (as we find them styled at Aldershott) "*huts*." Though answering a similar purpose, however, they are by no means identical.*

Those at Mourmelon—constructed by the *Génie* in an incredibly short space of time—were completed in the year 1857, and were destined to accommodate, besides a regiment of 1,600 infantry, 150 engineers. To these have now been added as many more huts on a new principle—they were just finished at the time of our visit, but were only to be inhabited after the *levée du camp*, by the men quartered at Châlons for the winter, of whom there remain about 6,000 after

* The present range of huts, including the new additions, is now capable of accommodating an entire division of infantry, four regiments consisting of three battalions each, and a battalion of Chasseurs. It also comprises the hospitals. The remainder of the men are lodged in the tents.

the camp is raised. In the construction of these, unburnt bricks have been used with great success and considerable economy. They are made of the white chalky soil of the neighbourhood formed into blocks, and dried in the sun. All the villages round about, are constructed of this, which appears to have become the staple building-material of this part of the country: it has the reputation of possessing greater durability and promoting warmth more readily than ordinary bricks.

Although there may be a perfect analogy between the camp of Châlons and the camp at Aldershott, the different aspect of the two can scarcely be realized by those who have not seen both. This is more apparent in the portion built with huts than in that covered with canvas.

Our readers are perhaps aware that the "huts" at Aldershott are really what they are called, and nothing more—*i. e.*, small, low, clumsy structures of rough timber, roof and walls being alike smeared over with a uniform coat of pitch, and therefore as utterly deficient in attractiveness of colour, as disappointing in form, proportion, solidity, or any of the resources of architecture.

These huts, although they have cost the country an enormous sum, are in fact the worst specimens our camp-experience has originated. Those at the Curragh are infinitely superior, and even at Shorncliffe they surpass these in many respects.

One or two of the officers' huts at Aldershott are distinguishable among the black and dismal mass by the gay, though too narrow, parterres surrounding them, or the ivy mantling round their walls; and as one turns to the rest, one cannot help exclaiming—"What a pity that the poetry of architecture should have been so entirely forgotten here!"

It is curious to see an officer and his family domesticated in one of these baby-houses, and one is forcibly reminded of a gipsying party temporarily accommodating itself to the privations of nomad existence for the sake of the change—only there is this difference, that there is no fun in the discomfort, and no charm in the novelty, for the inconvenience is permanent. Generally speaking, however, there is considerable ingenuity exercised in the shifts they make, and considerable good humour in the equanimity with which they endure the privations and annoyances of so confined a residence. One woman servant is the most their premises can accommodate; but then they have their "batmen," or, as they are familiarly called, "tigers," for whom, no doubt, they can find employment, but who may be considered compulsory retainers. And this introduces the mention of another little exercise of tyranny: the remuneration of these men is fixed by the military authorities at a stipulated sum, and—though it is not even supposed that they receive it—it is deducted from the pay of officers (or chaplains, as the case may be) for "wages."

It cannot be by a mere oversight—with the model which Châlons offers before our eyes, and the excellent moral effect of providing the men with out-door manual exercise, no less than with the opportunity of cultivating their tastes—that in England they are actually *restricted and prohibited* from growing plants or flowers round about their huts!

Now the "*Baraque*" of the French camp is no carpenter's shed, clumsily designed, flimsily constructed, caulked in the seams, and bedaubed with tar to remedy the want of durability of the material employed—it is *not* the failure of a bungling journeyman—it is *not* the experiment of an interested contractor who actually receives from the country £150 for each temporary, trumpery cabin—a disgrace to his taste, if not to his skill, and reflecting most certainly no credit on the facile acquiescence or deplorable inexperience of those who, by their assent to such a bargain, indicate their unfitness to be trusted with the administration of public money.*

* Similar complaints have been made, and not without reason, on the expense incurred by the construction of the new transport and coaling jetty adjacent to the south end of Portsmouth Dock-yard. This has just been completed at a cost of £15,000, and yet the object with which it was constructed has not been attained, owing to the shallowness of the water there. One transport, the Cressy, with troops on board, was placed alongside, and the troops disembarked from her; but the ship took the ground, and the experiment will not be repeated. The only chance of making it of any use, would now be to deepen the ground in front of the jetty by dredging; but the question arises

It is *not* all this: it is a well-placed, handsomely proportioned building, solidly constructed of light red bricks, filled into a frame-work of oak, not only contributing to the solidity of the walls, but breaking the monotony, and greatly improving the general effect; the roof, ending with projecting eaves, is of smooth countess slates, and the windows and doors, without being expensive or elaborate, are so placed as to give an agreeable finish; the whole is slightly raised above the level of the ground. Although solidity and usefulness have been mainly consulted, the *agrémens* of life are not overlooked; there is scarcely one hut where shrubs and flowers have not been planted, or creepers trained over the walls by the industry* of the soldiers themselves, who display much taste in their little arrangements.

The walls are plastered within. They are nearly twenty feet apart, and about thirteen feet in

—can the ground be dredged with safety to the structure? and even if it can, we must reckon on no small additional outlay. The construction of jetties without sufficient depth of water to enable ordinary troop-ships to approach, and of docks too shallow to receive ships of a deep draught of water, seems to be the established error in all additions and alterations to Portsmouth Dockyard.

* The measures adopted for keeping the ground dry and well drained, ought not to be passed over without notice, especially as the system is perfectly successful, and it is scarcely possible to imagine anything cleaner and neater than these broad, firm, dry, white roads, alike free from dust and damp.

height, to the spring of the roof. The windows are placed in the upper part of the wall, about six feet from the ground, in order not to prevent the men from putting their knapsacks over the head of their beds; they are at intervals of about six feet, and opposite each other, so as to answer the purposes of ventilation; in their attention to this vital particular the French are far ahead of us.

This branch of military economy has, it is true, been very largely discussed in England; it has even been pronounced impossible for a man to be properly lodged in less than 600 cubit feet of space. A practical investigation, however, shews that out of 76,813 men lodged in permanent barracks, only 2,003 enjoy this minimum—4,656 have only 550 feet, and all the rest, being 70,000 men, were more or less curtailed even of this smaller proportion. Upwards of 15,000 had less than 350, and nearly 35,000 less than 400 cubic feet.

Many minor measures appear to be equally neglected, and contribute to precipitate the ultimate result of the otherwise unaccountable mortality among the men. While nine in a thousand is the average of ordinary deaths among males of corresponding age, seventeen in a thousand has been found to represent the mortality among soldiers at home.

To defective ventilation and bad air, must be added want of facilities for recreation, and an injudicious selection of aliments. It may be true

that good meat is supplied to the men, and in sufficient quantities, but their means of cooking are so imperfect that they have only one mode of dressing it. Thus, although in the prime of life, they are carried off by those diseases engendered in the healthiest by breathing foul air, depression from the monotony of their lives, and mal-assimilation from want of variety in their food. If they fall ill they have little chance of recovery, for when they are transferred to the hospital the evil is found to be as great, if not greater, there.

The report tells us that "of all parts of a barrack, the hospital is planned with apparently the smallest amount of attention or consideration for the object it is intended to fulfil. These things ought not only to be looked into, but should be reformed without delay. There are still 25,000 men quartered in town barracks, whose lives are at this moment in jeopardy from the operation of these causes. The Commissioner's return (June 1861) shews the total number of barracks in the United Kingdom to be 243, and of hospitals 167: of these, 162 of the former, and 114 of the latter, are reported for improvement; while 53 barracks and 81 hospitals remain to be inspected."*

* We are glad to believe that our camp has been in some of these respects, even slightly improved. We find that in the seven years ending 1854 the Guards lost fifteen men per thousand; the regiments at Aldershott and Shorncliffe in three years ending 1859, lost only four.

This state of things should convince us, to some purpose, of the evil results of the civil contract system, and the abuses of jobbery which vitiate and disfigure nearly every department holding the administration of public money in England. The country is liberal enough in its votes of supply for these important items of expenditure, and yet the moral and physical welfare of our troops is being prejudiced every hour by insufficient accommodation and defective appliances.

Indeed the whole camp-system presents so many points of failure and disappointment, and our speculations have turned out so inferior to those of our French neighbours, that a little while ago there was serious talk of abandoning all further pursuit of the idea—and that, after such enormous sums of public money have been squandered on the attempt. Now, however, it appears that a further trial is to be granted them, and a commission has just been appointed to visit and investigate the French camps, but especially that at Châlons, in order, if possible, to discover the secret of their success, and to improve ours thereby.

Our readers ought to know that the commodious, spacious, airy, solid, and even picturesque *baraques* lodging 50 men, and which form so striking, and, we may add, so pleasing a contrast to our camp huts, are completed in all their details at a cost of no more than 6,000fr. or £240, whilst

our shabby, low, draughty, ill-contrived, and unsightly constructions, holding only 20 men, cost the country the disproportionate price of from £150 to £200. The imposition, or jobbery, or mismanagement, is so gross, it fills one with indignation to hear that this sum has been actually *paid* to *somebody*, for every one of these kennels!

But this is only one item: we should have no difficulty in bringing before our readers, in melancholy detail, the sad series of blunders committed at Aldershott, by which their credulity has been practised upon, and their pockets lightened, from time to time, with a fair prospect of a continuation of the system which is victimizing them; but we prefer to our own assertion, the statement of the member for Liskeard, supported as it is by Colonel North, Colonel Dickson, and other gallant members.

It was on the late motion that a sum of £700,000 should be granted to defray the cost of barracks at Aldershott, and if we quote only one of the speeches to which this demand gave rise, it is because the majority of those which followed on the subject are to the same effect.

* * * "It could not be said," observed Mr. Bernal Osborne, "that the parsimony of Parliament had ever interfered with military expenditure; on the contrary, it seemed to be an established dogma in the house that whatever lavish expenditure the minister called for, on the army, should be granted

'*sub silentio*.' We were surrounded by 'the pride, the pomp, and circumstance of war' on every side—cast-iron forts on the shoals at Spithead, volunteers, camps at Shorncliffe, Colchester, and the Curragh; and lastly, this monument of extravagance, the camp at Aldershott. The original vote for Aldershott was asked for in February, 1854, on the express understanding that it was to be a camp where certain bodies of troops should be assembled for periodical exercise in the summer months. But it had since been converted into a permanent barrack. He had no wish now to go into the policy of bringing a large body of troops together during the whole year, though he believed it had a tendency to demoralize the men, and certainly not to improve the morals of the neighbourhood. (Hear, hear.) The original sum contemplated for the purchase of land was £100,000, and in 1854 the government announced that they had purchased 7,000 acres at an expense of £156,000, or about £20 an acre—a capital bargain as it was said to be: though he held it to be the dearest purchase the government ever made. (Hear.) The first mistake in this unhappy business was the selection of the site, part of which was a swamp, which had to be drained with great difficulty, and at great expense. Then there was not a supply of water to be got. The Royal Engineers were set to work, and a pretty mess they made of it. They dug holes in all directions, only to fill them

up again. He was sorry not to see the hon. and gallant member for Chatham in his place, for he knew something about the business. (Hear, hear.) But it was not very strange that he was not there, seeing how impossible it was for anybody to know when these army estimates were coming on. (Hear, hear.) Then Mr. Simpson, a Civil Engineer, was set to work, and at an expense of £26,568 he succeeded in getting water two miles off. People in the metropolis had to pay pretty heavily for water rates; but £26,000 for getting water two miles off was a nice nut for the financial reformers to crack, if any there were, either in the House or out of it. (Hear, hear.) Then the ground was so bad that the camp had to be gravelled at an expense of £12,800. Then came the most extraordinary business of all —the erection of temporary huts: in the estimates of 1854-5, there was a sum of £175,000 taken for the erection of temporary buildings or huts! In the return which he had moved for it was said that no special estimate was made of the cost of the huts, because it was not determined how many men would have to be provided for; but, however, £175,000 was the sum taken. The sum was granted of course, and then the matter was forgotten; but he hoped that the return he had moved for, would have the effect of inducing hon. members to look back more narrowly into such matters, and to follow up their history. (Hear, hear.) The huts were found to be

not only bad in design, but infamous in construction. (Hear, hear.) They were neither watertight nor airtight. (Hear, hear.) The Government then entered into a contract to cover these huts with patent felt at an expense of £14,000; but then even, they were found not to be watertight, and another contract was entered into to tar them over. Certainly those who had constructed them ought not only to be tarred but feathered; at any rate, they had feathered their nests well. (Laughter.)

"The whole expense of erecting these huts for Aldershott and other stations had been £796,100; at Aldershott alone they had cost £496,000, and yet they were now in a state of utter rottenness and decay. (Hear, hear.) He should very much like to hear what the government intended to do with these huts now. After the construction of the huts it was determined to erect permanent barracks for 6,000 men, but the wise engineers employed, instead of selecting a site which would have allowed room for expansion, went to the very verge of the boundary of the 7,000 acres, and fixed on a site in the hollow, which was very difficult to drain, and which formed a very bad site altogether. (Hear, hear.) Then they found they had omitted an hospital, and there being no suitable site, they were obliged to give £2,000 for a couple of acres to build one upon; whereas, if the land had been purchased in the first instance, it might have been bought for twenty pounds an acre

(Hear, hear.) And now, through building these permanent barracks on the very verge of the boundary, a town had sprung up on the private property adjoining, which contained every element of demoralization. (Hear, hear.) Great as was the reputation of this country for blundering, there had never been such a succession of blunders made as in the Aldershott business. (Hear, hear.) The public had now got what many people imagined a very splendid site and a very splendid file of barracks; but he was informed by persons competent to form an opinion, that the barracks, though constructed on an expensive system, were very defective. He believed that in May they were nearly burnt down, owing to the flues being made of half brick, and many of them resting on wood; at all events, he could say that the authorities had been in a great hurry to provide the barracks with fire-escapes. Then the cooking-houses were stuck right under the barracks, and expensive lifts were made, on the model, he supposed, of those at the Carlton and Reform (a laugh), in order to send up the men's dinners. These lifts had never been used at all. (Hear, hear.) It had been found also that the cooking-houses were in the wrong place; they ought to have been detached, instead of being so placed as to roast the soldiers in summer as well as in winter. But this was not all. When the Aldershott camp was first established, iron stoves were provided for

20,000 men. What happened? They were condemned, and were sold as old iron. (Hear, hear.) Captain Grant, a very able artillery officer, then set up a most effective cooking apparatus for 50,000 men, which had been in use for six years. He had since been informed that Captain Grant's apparatus was to be knocked on the head, and a new office had now been created, the office of instructor of military cookery. (Laughter.) Mr. Warrener had superseded Captain Grant, and had set up a cooking apparatus as an experiment—an expensive one, no doubt, as most of the experiments were. Next there was a system of ventilating barrack grates; 3,000 of these were put up, costing £3 10*s.* a piece. They were of course admirable for every purpose except that for which they were intended, and fifty tons of them had been sold for old iron. It was necessary to put up others in their place, and altogether this experiment had cost not less than £25,000. (Hear, hear.) It would be curious to know the total cost of the barrack stoves which had been applied for, and condemned at Aldershott. This vote, which commenced as a temporary encampment and amounted to £100,000, had swollen to £1,500,000, (hear, hear,) and he thought he had stated enough to show that it was time to put a stop to such a system. (Hear, hear.) If this blundering at Aldershott had occurred in the sister country, the thing would have been stamped for ever, but happening in England,

he supposed it would only be pointed to as an instance of the solid good sense of John Bull. He hoped that if there were any good sense in John Bull, and any regard to the public purse in this House, that Aldershott would be looked upon as an example to be shunned, and that the House would not year after year be content to vote enormous sums without being persuaded that they get value for their money, and that they were not paying through the nose for that very expensive article—a standing army." (Cheers.)

In the course of the same debate we find the member for Pontefract very properly demanding an explanation of another proposed grant of £60,000 for Colchester Barracks,* £33,000 having already been expended there! Sir F. Smith objected to a further vote of £60,000 for the purchase of a rifle range at Gravesend, when they had already land of their own at Chatham, within seven or eight miles, and with every facility.

Mr. B. Osborne also stated his surprise that an additional sum of £20,000, making £60,000 in all, should be required for Fleetwood for rifle-ranges and butts.

The country is not perhaps aware that the officers' barracks at Dover cost at the rate of £1,000 for

* The present strength of the camp at Colchester is 52 officers and 2,269 men, including 144 in hospital. There are besides, 230 women and 292 children in the camp.

each officer, and even at this extravagant expense to the country they are ill-constituted and comfortless.

A little later in the Session, in a further debate upon army-supply, General Peel called the serious attention of the House to the contemplation of the large sum demanded under the head of excess of military expenditure, and to make up a deficiency which he was ready to prove ought to have been foreseen and provided for by the Government. He alluded to the enormous sums required respectively for the new Foreign-Office, and for public education, and to the prolonged discussions to which the estimated requirements of these two calls had given rise; but here was an amount to be voted—for a purpose for which it had no business to be wanted at all—which would build five Foreign Offices, and educate the whole United Kingdom. The hon. member proceeded in a detailed speech, the statements in which were supported by references to public documents, to point out the various instances of mismanagement, miscalculation, and misappropriation, which could alone account for so startling a deficiency, but he obtained a very unsatisfactory reply from the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and although one or two other members joined in the discussion the subject was ultimately dropped, without any attempt at proposing such vigorous measures as should arrest this wanton waste of public money.

Imperfect as is the Curragh experiment, it appears, after all, to be the best conceived and most successfully carried out of our military attempts. In fine weather, when the ground is dry, many of the objections to the locality are removed. On the occasion of the Prince of Wales' visit, which took place at a favourable moment, the Curragh presented a very creditable spectacle, and the grand review given in honour of his Royal Highness came off with considerable *éclat*.

The Curragh may, in fact, be called a military town, with a population of from ten to fifteen thousand. Its main street is about a mile in length. From this, a number of smaller streets branch off at right angles, down the slope towards the south. There is a market-place to which the peasantry from the surrounding country bring provender for the supply of the camp.

The mental and moral wants of the community are not neglected; there are schools for the children, and two handsome churches—one for Protestants, and one for Catholics. In the former the Presbyterian chaplain officiates, as well as his fellow-labourer of the Establishment. There are libraries for those disposed to read.

The whole extent of the camp-ground constituting the Curragh is five thousand acres. This camp has cost about £300,000, while Aldershott has run

away with a million and a half, and has little indeed to show for it.

We will now return to the French camp, and its huts, which we consider important to describe.

Each company has two *baraques*, the first containing a large room, with a fireplace in it, for fifty men, and another, likewise warmed, for four *sous-officiers;* the second, a room with a fireplace, for fifty men, and a smaller for the sergeant-major and the *fourrier*. The larger compartment is entered by a door on either side, while the smaller, belonging to the *sous-officiers*, is divided off by a partition, and has a separate entrance at the extremity of the *baraque*.

In that of the men, the beds are neatly ranged, twenty-five down each side, the head being against the wall; and down the centre is a space sufficiently wide to admit of the stoves being placed there, and now and then a table.

The rooms of the non-commissioned officers offer a very snug and comfortable appearance; each has his bed, his table, his chair, and his little domain to himself. Most of them are arranged with great neatness, the contingent of furniture and properties contributed by each—among which are often engravings, ornaments, books, &c.—being disposed with almost a rivalry of *propreté* and propriety.

The superior officers have their *baraques* on the

opposite side of a broad road, known as the "Rue des Officiers;" and as they face East and West, they stand at right angles to the *baraques* of the men, from which they are thus divided. There is little difference in the external appearance of the respective buildings.

The Colonel has three rooms, of which two have fireplaces; the captain two, of which one has a fireplace; the lieutenants and sub-lieutenants two, but they are shared by two.

The "Rue des Officiers" is a broad, handsome street, and offers a really striking vista, the wide intervals at which the *baraques* are placed, lengthening the perspective to a considerable extent, and with very great effect. The streets formed by the spaces between these detached *baraques* have their names as at Aldershott; indeed, the "*casernement d'hiver*" has now reached such an extent, that it would be impossible to get on without distinction of names and numbers. There are five postmen to distribute the correspondence of this extempore town.

The Roman road which crosses the camp just beyond the cavalry tents, certainly does great credit to the navvies of that ancient empire. It is hard, firm and slightly convex, so that it is always dry. The soldiers, we are told, are continually picking up Roman coins, bits of armour, of harness, and other evidences of the passage of the warriors

who preceded them in their possession of this portion of transalpine Gaul: while at Reims still stands a magnificent old Roman gateway, similar to, but more elegant in design than the "Porta Nigra," at Treves.

A cook-house, furnished with eight cooking stoves, is assigned to each company, as also a cellar. Water is supplied to the huts by separate wells belonging to each regiment. This important matter has *not* been overlooked, as at Aldershott. In fact, the supply is so abundant, that were another camp to be formed on this plain, there are wells enough to supply an equal number of men with water.

There are among the *baraques* several prisons; these are readily distinguished by their external appearance, the difference consisting in the darkening of the windows by a permanent shutter, which prevents those within from looking out, at the same time admitting but a small quantity of light. However, as the confinement is neither upon the solitary, nor even on the silent, system, the captives can carry on their intercourse with equal vivacity in the penumbra. The men seldom sham to get into hospital, but they often wittingly put themselves "*au mazaro*," not exactly for the sake of being there—though the repose and idleness they enjoy, together with such society as they may meet during incarceration, form a phase of existence not altogether unwelcome, were it unaccompanied by a stoppage of pay—

but if they chance to get a little money, the temptation to treat themselves and their comrades—in fact, to enjoy a spree—is too great to be resisted, and the consequence is, they take themselves off into the country, and perhaps even sometimes remain out of bounds and out of call for a couple of days, knowing that the Salle de Police must be their doom at the end of it. "Que voulez vous? à la fin vient le quart d'heure de Rabelais, il est vrai; mais en attendant on a fait sa petite bordée." The door of the prison, though guarded, remains open for an hour every afternoon. A new *corps de garde*—of which there are several, having the front elevation in the *châlet* style, and highly ornamental—is in course of construction close by the prison.

In the centre or *rond-point* of each division, stands a *phare* or lighthouse, elevated above the other buildings, and serving to indicate to those of the soldiers who may be out after dark, the direction of their quarters.

The *ambulances* are three in number, and stand within their own enclosure, on a rising ground; the space around the buildings serving as a garden for the convalescents, who may be seen airing themselves in a not very becoming costume, consisting of a grey flannel dressing-gown, and a pointed white nightcap; of all *coiffures*, at the same time the most conical and the most comical.

The first of these, admirably placed, and close to

the village of Mourmelon, is called *Ambulance du centre*, and belongs to the *première division*.

The second, called *Ambulance de Gauche*, belongs to the second division of Infantry, and is most agreeably situated at a little distance from a long skirting of woodland.

The *Ambulance de Cavalerie*, called *Ambulance de Droite*, stands back towards the centre of its own division, backed by the Cheneu, in front of the Petit Mourmelon, and is equally well placed with the other two.

The staff of each *ambulance* or hospital consists of—

1st. The Medicin-Major.
2nd. Medicin-Aide-Major.
3rd. Pharmacien Aide-Major.

The administration is composed of—

1st. An Adjutant-en-chef.
2nd. Adjutant (en second).
3rd. Infirmier-Major.
4th. Twelve Infirmiers.

These last, we fear, are but sorry substitutes for the Sœurs de Charité, and the patients know it well; their rough kindness, when they *are* kind, and their well-meant officiousness when they consider themselves skilful, but poorly replace the cheering voice, the gentle hand, the quick eye, the experienced treatment, and the ready attention of the unwearied

Daughter of Charity, who bestows her labour of love as if the love which makes her what she is, were as exhaustless as the divine source whence she draws it.

Although, however, the more refined consolations of the sick bed—which, superfluous as they may seem to the thoughtless and superficial, are yet in some cases indispensable to mental tranquillity and the recovery of health—may be denied to the patients of the Châlons camp, every aid that can be introduced by sanitary legislation, and promoted by official supervision, is brought to bear upon them.

The question of hospital management is, as we have said, one of those which has seriously occupied the attention of M. le Baron Larrey, while closely inquiring into the minutest details of the soldier's life, and the result has been the gradual formation and adoption of a system which seems to embrace every hygienic consideration.

Each hospital is a vast parallelogram, composed of an immense area one story high, containing four *corps de bâtiment*, built of brick, roofed with slate, lighted and ventilated in the most satisfactory way by twenty-two windows on either side.

Three of these buildings united, constitute the wards, and in the fourth are comprised the pharmacy, the "*tisanerie*," the dispensary, the kitchen with three stoves, and the office for receiving and registering the patients.

The distance at which the beds are placed from each other, is regulated with a strict regard to the health of the occupants, and the greatest cleanliness reigns in every part of the establishment. Each hospital has its bath.

The linen, after various trials, was not found to be sufficiently well washed in the camp laundry, it is therefore now sent to Châlons, where, under the *agent de l'administration de l'hôpital militaire*, it is returned expeditiously, and much more satisfactorily cleansed. The drugs, as well as all articles of food, are examined under very strict surveillance before they are admitted for use.

The *medecin de troupe* is no unimportant functionary, and upon his skill and responsibility fall a variety of duties of the most arduous kind, and of the most incessant occurrence. During a march, in which he forms one of the rear-guard, his care is liable to be claimed at any moment by any soldier who may fall out during the march, and after each fresh call he must rejoin his battalion in order to be always at his post.

Arrived at the halting place, when every one else seeks repose, he must visit his patients, be ready to rise at a moment's notice, throughout the night, or to betake himself to the detachment where his presence may be considered necessary.

Nevertheless, the surgeon of a regiment, after a long and fatiguing day's journey, is as unfit as any

other functionary to fulfil with his ordinary ability the mission confided to him. He is at once under the influence of a moral and a physical lassitude, demanding rest and excluding all mental labour.

At the camp of Châlons the doctors follow their regiments in all their movements—on field-days and even at the ordinary drills—in short, everywhere they share the fatigue of all, and are subject to all the phases of military life.

In case of a fire, either in the camp or the neighbouring villages, the hospital surgeons immediately repair to the spot, to be at hand to afford their services either to the soldiers or the civil population.

The precautions taken against an accident of this nature at Aldershott deserve some credit, and indeed the danger of a general conflagration in case of one of these tarred huts catching fire, could not but suggest itself to these military squatters; the result has been a most ingenious invention, which has so far been adopted by the authorities, that an apparatus constructed on the principle suggested has been supplied, and remains within the camp ready for use whenever an occasion may occur. Hitherto, however, great care appears to have been exercised, for, although there have been alarms of fire, the particulars of one of which we will relate presently, there has as yet occurred no opportunity for using the patent extinguisher.

This simple but effectual piece of mechanism con-

sists of a four-sided folding iron screen, of sufficient dimensions to embrace one of the huts, and no sooner is a building discovered to be in flames than the fire-brigade, which is drilled to act with surprising celerity, appears with its incombustible walls, opens, fixes, and closes them round the burning hut, which is of course thus effectually restrained from communicating with the rest, *et tout est dit.*

Whenever there is an alarm of fire in camp, the measures taken are very peremptory; the tocsin rings, the drums beat, the trumpets flourish, and out pour a large force, be it day or night, hastening with despatch, but without confusion, to the scene of action, so that in a very few minutes the danger is over, and all minds are reassured.

An officer quartered with his family in a hut at Aldershott, was relating to us one day, when seated at his hospitable board, the incident alluded to above. He had, it appears, assembled around his fireside one winter evening, two or three brother officers, and after a game or two, they were sitting cosily enough enjoying their pleasant social intercourse over a glass of whiskey and water. Suddenly one of the guests was called out on some matter of duty, and remained away half-an-hour, during which his glass of punch became of too low a temperature to be agreeable to a man just returning under a warm shelter from the frosty atmosphere without. Intending, therefore, to brew himself a fresh bumper from the steaming

kettle, he thoughtlessly threw on to the fire the rejected mixture. In an instant the chimney was in a blaze, and almost before the friends, who looked at each other aghast, could exchange an idea, loud rung the alarm-bell; the blast of the trumpet and the roll of drums followed in instant succession; another minute and the hut and its inmates would have been surrounded by troops, and stood a good chance of being imprisoned within the iron extinguisher; but the host's presence of mind was a match for the alacrity of the fire-brigade; quick as thought he throws a pail of water over the door-mat, and seizing the soaking mass, rushes up to the chimney, on the top of which it is laid in the twinkling of an eye. Another second and it would have been too late.

"Hallo! Where is the fire?" call out a succession of voices as they approach nearer and nearer the marked hut.

"It was one of these, I am sure."

"And I saw flames a yard high issuing from the chimney."

"So did I"—"and I"—"and all of us;" and with this they arrived at the spot; and while one detachment thundered at one door, and another at another, a third presented itself at the entrance of our friend's hut, with the inquiry whether there was not a fire to put out.

"Fire!" said he, with a sang-froid which was

almost too much for the gravity of his guests, who had been enjoying the proceedings—"not *here*; there is a fire somewhere, evidently; but we're all right here, thank you"—and bowing courteously he retreated within, and the brigade continued its search, till, thoroughly puzzled by the mysterious phenomenon, they in their turn retired also.

But we have not yet done with Châlons: behind the tents of the Etat-Major stand the buildings serving as kitchens and mess-rooms for the officers of each regiment, who in 1858 first began to eat in common, and at the same time to adopt the term "mess," which it seems they took from the English in the Crimea.*

These *baraques* are well ventilated, and are roofed with bitumenized paper, a system of covering in which, in its way, is considered to answer, and gives satisfaction. The dimensions are spacious, and the interior is ornamented with considerable taste and elegance. The names of battles wherein the French have carried the day, are enshrined in garlands of

* Talking once to two French soldiers who had obtained Victoria medals, we were amused at the idea which Crimean experience had given them of the English: not suspecting of what country we were, they very freely expatiated on the subject. "Ah oui, ce sont de braves soldats—de beaux hommes . . . mais! Dieu sait . . . d'une apathie! d'une pesanteur! d'une froideur à geler ceux qui s'en approchent! Pour nous autres il y a quelque chose d'incompréhensible dans cette nature à la fois si courageuse et si peu impressionable."

flowers around the walls of these camp dining-halls, so that pleasing souvenirs may meet the eye of the guests as they are seated at table.

Maîtres d' hôtel, under the supervision of a military commission, have charge of the culinary service. These establishments may be said to answer the purpose of a London Club—they comprise the conveniences of a café, a library, a reading and a billiard-room. Papers and periodicals are always to be seen there, and these vast and elegant saloons seem to invite the officers of all the regiments to meet in a common feeling of fraternization, and to join in proposing cordial toasts to France, its ruler, and its army.

Between the tents of the officers and those of the men upon the *Grande Route,* are situated the *baraques* appropriated to cooking purposes. Each kitchen possesses six cooking-stoves acting with great perfection. It is part of the duty of the doctor of each corps to examine the quality of the meat and of the broth, and to superintend with equal regularity the kitchens appropriated to the *sous-officiers* and to the men.

The *administration militaire,* to which is entrusted the duty of supplying the camp with bread, meat, dried vegetables, sugar, coffee, and wine, has been found to discharge its duty with great satisfaction. The land—notwithstanding its poverty and aridity—suffices to produce most of the vegetables

needed for the diet of the men; some are fetched as far as from Reims, around which town there are many *maraichers*. The dietary of the men at the camp allows to each—

Of *Pain de munition* (same quality as household bread), 750 grammes (three quarters of a pound).

Meat, 350 grammes, being 50 more than is allowed in garrison.

Vegetables, 60 grammes.

Salt, 10 grammes.

Sugar and coffee, 16 grammes.

Brandy, 6 centilitres.

Tobacco, 100 grammes every ten days.

On grand field days, and on the occasion of certain solemnities, the men receive 25 centilitres of wine as an extra allowance.

Rice, boiled under very particular directions, is given to the men in their *bouillon*. Potatoes and green vegetables to the amount of 80 grammes. The dried vegetables so extensively used in the Crimea, have not obtained favour in the camp, being found dearer in proportion, and less wholesome than fresh vegetables.

Le Baron Fiereck, Commander-in-Chief of the Artillery, having pronounced his opinion that too great uniformity of diet is prejudicial to the health of the men, has made every effort to vary as much as possible the ordinary of those under his command.

The beverage most approved by the medical officers seems to be coffee, which is prized for its tonic,

and at the same time, stimulating qualities. It seems to revive the strength of the men when exhausted by fatigue, and invigorates the organs numbed by cold; it accelerates the circulation, excites digestion, and helps the men to resist the ardour of the sun.

Coffee taken in the morning, therefore, before marches and manœuvres, is found to make the best meal; the coffee distributed by the *manutention* is of excellent quality, and as it is purchased whole, its genuineness can be tested. Chicory is forbidden to be mixed with it on account of its debilitating tendency.

Tobacco—distributed in the allowed quantities with great regularity—and coffee are the two greatest luxuries the soldier knows. Its use—moderated by the strict hygienic principle on which every detail of management is regulated in the camp—is found not only beneficial, but indispensable.

The *Boucherie* is an important department, where there are so many *bouches à viande*, as well as "*bouches à feu*," and must not be overlooked. It consists of two *hangars:* one, serving as the *abattoir*, or slaughter-house, has an inclined pavement, that the blood of the slain bullocks may run down into a reservoir, whence it is afterwards taken to mix with manure; the other building is that into which the meat is transferred to be cut up into joints.

A commission consisting of *vétérinaires* is charged with the duty of inspecting and receiving the cattle

and rejecting such as are not found to correspond with the conditions of admission. Thus upon one occasion, out of eighty head of cattle offered, sixteen were refused. The selection being made by the commission, the beasts destined to be slaughtered on the morrow are marked on the horns with a hot iron. At six o'clock in the morning their doom is sealed, and the men appointed by each regiment, conducted by an officer, come to fetch the quantity required. Stringent measures are adopted to make sure that no tricks are played, and that the cattle killed are those branded. The dépôt to which they are consigned is marked, and no stranger is suffered to enter. An officer also presides at the distribution, which is made with great fairness. The meat is divided into four categories, and each company receives in turn a portion of meat from each category until the weight be made up.

Notwithstanding the minute attention given to all these preliminaries, the soldier's mid-day—or rather afternoon—diet, for they dine at four, seems to consist simply of the universal *bouillon* and *bouilli*, or *pot au feu*, which hold so prominent a place in the *cuisine bourgeoise* of France. Our own testimony as regards the quality of the *bouilli*, places it, we are sorry to say, somewhere on a level with those enticing specimens of animal matter, known in the workhouse vocabulary as "clods and stickings," and the sight of which would go a long way towards persuading those

who are condemned to it, to become vegetarians . . . perhaps even trappists!

As may therefore be supposed, the "*hazard de la fourchette*" occasionally brings to light a *piéce de resistance* solid enough to resist even the *dura messorum ilia*, and on which even the teeth of a Zouave fail to make an impression. It is not unusual to see a humorous fellow brandishing on the point of his knife such a slice of "*vrai caoutchouc*," and having made it the subject of a series of *jeux d'esprit*, which "set the *table* (?) in a roar," whirl it round, and then aim it with unerring precision at the head of some luckless cur who may happen to be prowling about the tent, and who, pocketing the affront, carries off the morsel to growl over it in solitude. The mess of the French soldier *is*, therefore, under some circumstances, rather "a mess," and there does not seem to be much of what we call comfort about it. The occupier of the tent must consume his food as best he can, and he has no encouragement to linger over his meals. As for his *potage*, he sits down cross-legged, places the gamelle between his knees on the ground, and makes short work of that; but the *houilli* is another matter: when it is not so impracticable as to require being disposed of by the summary process intimated above, it is matter of mystery how he contrives to divide it—only imagine attempting to *cut* a beef sinew with a French knife in the hollow of a pewter bowl, and on one's lap!

What a complication of obstacles, and what a degree of admiration the feat at once inspires us with! Indeed nothing can be too difficult for the courage and ingenuity of our allies after this.

The French soldier, it will be seen, may be wholesomely and sufficiently—but he is by no means luxuriously fed; and whether it be that his constitution does not require it, or whether he is by nature indifferent to the pleasures of the table, or whether he is so trained as not to need superfluities, certain it is that the rations supplied suffice to render him strong, active, and hardy; and if any other proof were needed of what it might otherwise seem difficult to believe, viz.—that this system is more perfect in its results than our own, we need only refer to events of very recent date, when chance afforded so valuable an opportunity, not only of testing the endurance of the French soldier, but of comparing it with the susceptibility of our own men, who sunk so wofully under the privation of their accustomed support.

The cooking in the camp is managed by the soldiers themselves, who are all compelled—*nolentes volentes*—to take the office in turn; they are appointed six or eight at a time, week about, to cook for each company, and some are such proficients in the art, that they might in time become entitled to the *cordon bleu*, were it not that they end by concealing the real extent of their talents, lest they should be kept too

long at the work. Seneca has said, "Morbos innumerabiles miraris, coquos numera." The camp proves that the aphorism is not universally applicable.

The bakery stands to the west of the camp, and consists of a certain number of ovens of a peculiar construction, invented by M. Espinasse, *garde principal du génie,* and attached to the military *manutention* at Paris. They are formed by excavations lined with long plates of iron and covered with japan ware, over which is a layer of sand. A square receptacle made of brick is placed in front of the excavation.

Nine furnaces heat these ovens, and they are made to bake about 200,000 rations a day, being six batches daily and six nightly; for, of course, the fires do not go out, and are continually at work. The bread of the camp is excellent. Mixtures of various corns have been tried, and the result arrived at is found to combine economy and wholesomeness.

We do not know whether the camp-bakers consider themselves a part of the French army; but it appears that at Sunderland the other day, the "Army and Navy" having been drunk at a public dinner, a baker "rose" to return thanks, on the ground that he furnished biscuit to Her Majesty's forces, and was the only representative of the united service present!

We next come to the *cantines,* authorized and non-

official, the former being situated within the camp, and established in *Baraques* appropriated to the purpose, with a projecting roof, under which the men can sit at small tables, as in the Boulevard Cafés in Paris—and the latter installed along the high road from the entrance of the camp to the village of Mourmelon le Grand. In all these establishments the various liquors retailed, as well as that sold by the Vivandières, are submitted to a very close scrutiny. However, to the credit of the severity of this inquisition, and perhaps also to the consciences of the salesmen, not an instance has occurred in which it has been necessary to confiscate the liquor or to punish the dealer. Red and white wine—*du pays*—and therefore we suppose "Champagne,"—brandy and absinthe, are the beverages usually supplied, and doubtless most in vogue among the soldiers. Although there is no doubt that a habit of dram-drinking, or even an occasional excess, is on all accounts to be deprecated among soldiers, yet brandy of good quality taken in small quantities is allowed to be an excellent tonic for those subjected to the changes and chances of camp-life.

White brandy, made from beet-root, has been found so intoxicating in its effects upon those who exceed the prescribed quantity, that it has been strictly prohibited in some of the regiments.

"Absinthe," although pronounced by Pinel and

others to be an excellent febrifuge, has long been objected to by those who are most solicitous about the health of their soldiers; for though harmless enough, and even beneficial, when taken in moderation, its abuse has been known to produce such fearful results, that there is no doubt it will ultimately be altogether prohibited. The *dégustateurs* are no less zealous for the quality of the drinks which pass under their supervision, than for the due observance of the hours of closing all establishments which retail them.

On the whole, the commissariat is as judiciously, and we may add as successfully, regulated as can be expected, where business is done on so large a scale; and there are fewer complaints and more satisfaction than in England, where the cost is more considerable. We will hear on this subject the plaintive voice of a sufferer quartered at Aldershott before the recent improvements in this department, where this has long been a crying evil loudly demanding redress.

* * * * "When Her Majesty arrived at the extreme flank," says the *patient*, "some of the soldiers' tea and bread was presented to her, which she condescended very kindly to partake of, and, I understand, expressed herself favourably as to its quality. But I guess what she tasted was about the best the soldier ever gets. I have known stuff served out, said to be tea, which I should find it difficult to describe. The best idea I can convey is in the

words of an orderly officer, to whom the tea had been complained of as bad. Coming into the room and taking up a mess-tin full of the mixture, he tasted it, then turning to the orderly-sergeant, inquired, in a whisper, 'Is it tea or coffee?' 'Tea,' replied the sergeant in an under-tone. 'It's excellent, 'pon my life;' then said the officer aloud, looking boldly around him—'I never tasted better *tea*.' This may have been the case, but if so, it must have been the first he ever tasted.*

"But a soldier's rations are never first-rate. The contract only signifies second quality. In Aldershott, however, they ought to have, at least, a mixture of good and bad; but I am sorry to say that the meat here is like the nigger's wife, who was '*all* worser.'

"One day the rations were very bad, and were cast by a board of officers; this was of no avail, but a board of medical officers, having inspected the material, arrived at a similar decision.

"The provender was now sent back to the commissariat, and the proceedings of the board forwarded to the authorities. We waited anxiously for another supply of meat; but one, two, three, four o'clock passed, and no signs of a dinner! At last about five o'clock back came the same lot to us. A board of field officers had assembled at the request of the

* This reminds us of the Irish host who asked his guests if they would take "Tay-tay, or Coffee-tay."

Commissary-General, and as they were not to eat it, brought in a verdict against us, by saying, 'the meat was of a fair average quality;' by which I suppose they meant that there was both better and worse to be had.

"From this we were satisfied that it was useless complaining of our rations in future; and although we have had very indifferent meat and sour bread frequently since, we make no observations, but take it, consoling ourselves that bad food is a deuced sight better than none at all."

It seems hardly fair that a British soldier should ever have been reduced to such an alternative! One would think the country paid enough for her army to be creditably fed. A remedy has now been attempted, and where tried appears to have been successful.

We read in the Military intelligence of January 26th, 1861, that in consequence of the favourable working of the Commissariat system at Aldershott, where the soldiers are employed to kill and prepare the meat daily required in the camp, the Government have decided on adopting it at Chatham garrison. With this idea, a range of buildings is to be erected on the Crown land at Camp-field, a short distance out of the town, for slaughter-houses, the troops from the garrison being required to kill and prepare their own meat. The present arrangement for the supply of bread and groceries to the troops by con-

tract-tradesmen is to be abolished, and those articles will be furnished to the troops by the Commissariat from the Government stores upon the system now adopted at Aldershott.

There are many little hints, however, we might yet borrow from the French, concerning matters, trifling perhaps in themselves, but which, if judiciously considered and amended, would contribute not a little to the comfort and well-being of our men; for example, although we had experience of the difference of the two contrivances for carrying the supply of water allowed to each man in the Crimea, we have not yet introduced the *bidon*, so well suited to the purpose, and so simple in its construction that the only wonder is it did not suggest itself; and as for our "keg," it is not possible for a man, let him be ever such a novice in military questions, to see the two articles, side by side, and not be struck by the fitness of the one and the clumsiness and inefficiency of the other.

The *Bidon* is a flat flask made of tin, and therefore of light weight, about a couple of inches deep, and perhaps six or seven in length and breadth; for greater convenience in carrying it, it is shaped by a slight curve to the shoulders, across which it is slung by a leathern strap. It has two apertures in the top, that through which it is filled being funnel-shaped and closed by a cork, and that through which it is to be emptied, being

furnished with a small pipe, in shape like a cone, through which, though water can be drawn by the mouth, it does not spill; it is covered with leather or cloth to preserve it from rust, and being manufactured for the army in large quantities, the contract price is only about ninepence or tenpence each. We need not describe the bulky unwieldy object our men are compelled to carry as a substitute for this neat, handy article, of the weight of which the soldier is scarcely conscious, while its shape in no way incommodes him.*

It would almost appear, by the evidence of one of the witnesses at the late inquest on the remains of the unfortunate man who fell a victim, on the Guildford march, to the accumulated mistakes of our system of military equipment, that the want of proper attention to this simple article of prime utility, if not of necessity, was one of the causes of the poor fellow's death, for it was stated that he

* The French are ingeniously careful of the safety and health of their men.

We heard in the course of September last, of three privates of our 18th Hussars drowned whilst bathing near the pier at Brighton. Simultaneously with this circumstance appeared a paragraph announcing that a valuable invention for the use of the army has just been experimented on in Paris. It is described as at once simple and efficient, and it is expected to prove of great service for soldiers crossing deep streams, for, as the ammunition could be placed in the waterproof compartments, the men would be able to fire whilst in the water.

drank impure water during the halt at Cobham. Now, had he been provided with the little handy *bidon* of the French soldier, filled before starting with water from a tested source, *this* evil, at least, would have been spared: its weight would not have added materially to the "pack" and kit which is not considered too heavy a load for a British soldier on ordinary march.

The value of trifles is not sufficiently appreciated by those who preside over the details of regulation —there are cases in which they cease to be trifles. It is said of Maréchal Bugeaud that he had a mind of peculiar construction, for which nothing seemed either too great or too small, so inestimable are the benefits he conferred on the soldier by the attention he paid to matters affecting his comfort and convenience. This considerateness, and its results, have not been lost upon the men who not only hold the name of "Le Père Bugeaud" in affectionate and grateful remembrance, but hand down the tradition of his benevolence, with that of his exploits, to those who succeed them in the ranks.

It may not be uninteresting to our English readers to know how the hours of the French soldiers' camp-day are disposed of. The time for rising is as early as half-past four, when a gun is fired, to awaken the whole force. Immediately after, the coffee is distributed; at half-past five comes the *appel* to morning drill. At ten o'clock

the soup is given out, and at half-past eleven there is a second *appel.* At half-past four, work—whether theoretical study or practical exercise—ceases. At five o'clock, dinner; at eight, the *retraite* announced by the firing of a gun. At half-past eight the last *appel;* at ten, the *couvrefeu,* or extinction of lights and fires, and recall of the sub-officers.

Mondays and Thursdays are the field-days; the grand manœuvres last about five hours. But all these regulations undergo certain modifications, according to the season, in times of excessive heat, or for any other valid reason.

This year the grand manœuvres commenced about the 15th July. Maréchal the Duc de Magenta, Commander-in-Chief, most successfully carried out the experiment of making the cavalry charge squares of infantry from a distance of eight hundred metres. In a charge of real warfare, each infantry soldier ought to be able to load and fire six or seven times; but, generally, the effect produced upon his mind by the sight of squadrons advancing like a tempest, tends to prevent him from attaining that number. It is accordingly believed that by accustoming the infantry to the sight of cavalry charging, and by showing what it can do on such an occasion, each soldier will obtain confidence in himself, and that the general result will be excellent. Each regiment has been in turn subjected to the experiment. The charges of cavalry stop at twenty paces from the fronts

of the infantry; afterwards, imitations of some of the celebrated battles of the First Empire were given; and from reports and plans, the officers have been made to notice the skill displayed, or the faults committed, so as to ascertain the cause of victory or defeat in each engagement.

Considerable changes, it appears, have been made in the manœuvres and organization of the French army. The Emperor would wish to see it become the model for all European armies. General Schram —said to be one of the best officers in the French army for forming young soldiers—passed the greater part of the military "season" at the camp of Châlons, and several innovations proposed by this officer in the regiments of infantry, have received the Emperor's approval.

It is since the last war in Italy that the Emperor has given increased attention to the cavalry, their efficiency having been considerably augmented by the general introduction of rifled arms. General de Rochefort, say the official reports from the camp, has been commissioned to present his views on the subject, and as he is considered the most scientific tactician among the cavalry officers of France, the result is expected to be satisfactory. The General has had the command of the cavalry at Châlons during the late campaign, and the experiments he has suggested have been under the personal inspection of the Duke of Magenta; these have formed

the basis of the reports presented to the Emperor. The Lancers were to be tried in a series of marches and manœuvres against both infantry and artillery, whether mounted or on foot. The efficiency of the Lancers once ascertained, a similar process was to be gone through with the Cuirassiers. The final trials, made in the presence of the Emperor himself, have enabled him to determine whether any and what changes in the present system of cavalry movements are practicable.

All the General officers forming the *Comité de Cavalerie*, together with Maréchal S. Jean d'Angely, in command of the Imperial Guard, were summoned to witness these experiments, and have been invited to give their opinion on their probable utility. The impression seems to prevail among the French officers that, despite the improvement in fire-arms, and although the cavalry played but a secondary part in the Crimea, and also in the late campaign in Italy, they have been hitherto too much overlooked, and should be made capable of rendering important service in the field. In the plains of Africa the infantry would have cut a sorry figure unsupported by the cavalry. Hence the creation of the famous corps of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, without which the Zouaves themselves would have lost much of their *éclat*.

There would seem to be an end of the distinctions between "light infantry" and "heavy infantry" in the

French army; they have ceased to be separate corps, and the whole mass is now transformed into one uniform body of riflemen. The green and yellow epaulettes of the Voltigeurs and Grenadiers respectively are retained, but simply imply a distinction without a difference, forming a guide to ascertain which are the picked men who can thus be judiciously distributed in the flanks to steady the rest.

The *Ecole des Tirailleurs* has received special attention, and may now be pronounced faultless. The improvement effected in this branch of military manœuvring consists in grouping in fours, and this *école* forms the basis of the whole army. This is decidedly the most important feature in the new infantry regulations, and it is worthy of remark and study among ourselves.

It is strange, perplexing, and we might add, humiliating, to think, that with so signal a success before us as the *fait accompli* of Mourmelon, we should only be able to bring into competition the miserable, not to say disgraceful, failures of Chobham, Shorncliffe, Aldershott, and the Curragh. We are aware that these are not to be all considered as on a level, and that there are *degrees* of inefficiency to be observed in their mismanagement. As regards the first of our attempts—the Camp at Chobham—we have not much to say against the camp itself, which made a very fair appearance; our complaint is against the utter *futility* of this most expensive experiment.

"After the spectacle of the military encampment at Chobham," says the *Times*, "most people imagined, and certainly had a right to imagine, that the army had been brought into really good working condition. How sadly were we deceived! and how utterly defective has our system proved! When the improvement came to be put to the test, what was the result? Why, the whole of that grand, costly, and apparently excellent machinery was useless—nay, worse, it was ruined, for want of mere organization. Good weapons, good soldiers, good regiments, good artillery—all the seeming ingredients of a good army went for nothing! These very battalions,—as they stood on Chobham Common, to all appearance the very perfection of military manufacture,—came to perish helplessly on a foreign soil, for want of direction and administration." As regards the public money squandered in this fruitless pursuit, the writer goes on to predict deploringly that the *fifteen millions* (!) about to be voted in the current Session of 1860, would be destined to be "as wofully misapplied as the *ten millions* of 1853."

A statement which appears in the *Times* of the 17th June last, informs us that no less a sum than £1,421,153 has been expended at Aldershott in the purchase of land, erection of barracks and huts, supply of water, and such like. Further works have been approved by Government, which will cost £91,563, and a vote for £54,563 towards that sum will be proposed this Session.

Steps towards the formation of a new camp at Colchester are already taken; orders are being carried out for the construction of main drainage. The buildings will be for the accommodation of 4,000 men, embracing each department of the service. Let us hope that a new system may be adopted in the appropriation of the necessary disbursements. Of the mismanagement occurring in the other camps, the military world is well aware, and the public need not be in the dark, for they must have seen very full particulars in the *Times* correspondence; one soldier states his "preference for colonies, (whither regiments are sent for misconduct,) over the camp at Aldershott," which, according to many of these accounts, is "only fit for a place of expiation," and we must record our personal testimony that a locality more cheerless or uninviting it was never our lot to visit. We confess, when on the spot, we have rather diregarded this characteristic, striking as it is, in favour of what we hoped was its practical utility, until we visited, in its turn, the Camp of Châlons, and then, indeed, when we saw the superior result which was produced out of materials offering decidedly fewer capabilities, we could not help feeling wounded in our national pride (every Englishman's weak point), and wondering why we could not have done at least as much, if not more, than our neighbours.

It is painful even to allude to the woful plight

and cruel extremities to which the men were at one time reduced at the Curragh, not to mention the barbarous usage of the horses, which might be attended to with advantage, before we undertake to reform, as has been suggested, the arrangements at Alfort. We do not mean to advocate vivisection, if it can be dispensed with, but there is at least a plausibility in that, while the cruelties practised on the horses at the Curragh were both gratuitous and expensive.

"The miserable state of both horses and men," wrote one of the sufferers, "unless seen, cannot be imagined. The latter are crammed ten or twelve into a tent hardly as many feet in diameter, while the horses, poor beasts! patiently stand up to their hocks in a lake of liquid mud, which can only be compared to that of Balaklava."

"Instead," observes another, "of the cavalry regiments being more effective for active service than those in barracks, the reverse is the case. The horses, which went to the camp in fine condition, have some of them died, others seem likely to follow, and a great number are *so lame from the deep cuts of the picket ropes,* that they are obliged to be left in the lines when the regiments turn out. The men are taken into hospital with ague, rheumatism, &c., which never affects them in barracks, and the saddlery becomes so rotten from the wet, that it will soon be rendered useless. The Government should

recollect what it has cost the country for each effective man and horse."

A third comments upon "the mistaken principle that, because a man may at some day of his life be compelled to sleep at the bottom of a ditch, he should therefore undergo an apprenticeship of many successive months each summer to that sort of couch, by sleeping in a dangerously damp tent;" and again he pleads the cause of "the most noble of quadrupeds subjected to the barbarous error which pickets him knee-deep in mud without covering, while his rider, perhaps a stolid recruit, is learning how to accommodate himself to camp life."

A fourth says, "Surely it must appear to every one a gross inconsistency, that, while we are voting millions for the defence of our arsenals, those in authority should be so unmindful, I may add prodigal, of the health of our brave soldiers and of the noble animals who share their dangers and privations."

We are induced to ask why, if we have not the genius to start better systems of our own, we cannot at least borrow a hint from our allies over the water? As regards the condition of the soldiers in the French camp, no sooner is a grievance discovered than it is attended to, and a hundred inventions are proposed as remedies, the most promising of which is at once introduced, and if that do not prove successful, another is tried; thus the men are

not only relieved from the inconvenience to which they are subjected, but one of the ends and objects of the encampment is achieved, which was to discover and remedy the evils attendant on camp life against the time when it must, of necessity, be adopted. As for the horses, they must certainly have been more knowingly managed in the French than in the English camp, for although they have no stabling, and are simply picketed under the open sky, at all events each beast is covered with a stout horse-cloth, and all risk of their standing in the mud is done away by the pavement of stones or pebbles which the soldiers are made to lay for their standings.

A further complaint made by the soldiers in this miserable, boggy, misty, miasmatic Curragh Camp, out of which the doctors, from the first, predicted a frightful train of ague, rheumatism, and typhus, was, that their clothes were hopelessly injured, and that no contribution was accorded to them for the loss. No allowance of spirits was made to the men in camp, though it would be in active service, and yet we doubt whether the exposure and hardships of war are much greater than those it was their lot to undergo there.

The Dragoons, it appears, were obliged, during heavy rain, to go twice each day two miles from the camp to water those of their horses which were able to walk so far; the cloth capes they wear over their

jackets soon became saturated, and *remained constantly wet*, for there was no means of drying them. The cavalry soldiers, whether it rained or shone, were obliged to go three times a day to groom their horses, *standing ankle deep in the mire*, though why (if, as has been said, the site of the camp was chosen on an incline) ditches could not have been made, it is impossible to conceive. Often they were kept waiting for their meals till much later than the appointed time, owing to the difficulty of getting the fires to burn, and when, wearied and discouraged, they retired to rest, they were fain to sleep upon the sloppy ground; for although they had straw supplied to them, it so soon became wet they were glad to get rid of it. It was truly distressing to see the poor fellows trying to dry their clothes. Now it is only natural to inquire how it is we are perpetually getting into these scrapes, and do not perceive by experience that there must be something radically defective in our whole military economy?

Is it to the rapacity and to the miserable system of jobbery, or to the unfitness of those appointed to manage these matters,* or to want of organization, or to all combined, that the health of our men, the

* A fresh instance of culpable negligence and mismanagement has recently come to our knowledge, to which it appears that no fewer than forty-nine men have fallen a sacrifice. It appears that there is a pontoon bridge at Aldershott, over which the men have been continually falling into the water, after dark, and during fogs, for want of a little bit of paling!

lives of their horses, and the enormous amount of money are annually sacrificed; and yet when we see the supineness with which atrocities of this kind are overlooked, and the leniency with which, when brought home, they are passed over, we can scarcely be surprised at their frequent recurrence; but of the system of peculation and its evils we have spoken in another place.

We know not if people are beginning to tire of complaining of this state of things, and, hopeless of a remedy, to give it up in despair; but "there is a rumour," says the February number of the *Army and Navy Gazette*, "almost a belief, that the costly experiments in making soldiers and generals at Aldershott will be brought to an end. If the gain can be proved equivalent to the outlay, there is no reason to discontinue the process: it seems to be *suspected* (!) such is not the case. At all events, there is a notion that only the *cadre* of the camp will be kept up in the form of the barracks already built, the mess huts, the baking and cooking establishments and the brick edifices and the huts will be disposed of. Indeed, it is further stated, that the estimated cost of repairing the huts in camp would be £20,000, and that, after all, they would not be good for much. The camp at Châlons will probably be selected as the model for the new camp, and the troops will be put under canvas."

We should certainly recommend this measure.

It is in contemplation to complete forthwith the new structure of hut-barracks at Gravesend; but it will be some time before they are ready for occupation by the troops, the authorities having made the discovery that it will be necessary to erect, besides a range of buildings for about fifty officers, as well as a hospital for sick troops, commissariat stores, wash-houses and other necessary buildings for a force of eight hundred men and officers, who will then be quartered at Gravesend. The erection of the additional buildings will involve two separate contracts, and it will of necessity be some time before they are completed, nothing but the plans having been as yet commenced.

The extensive range of buildings already erected, include six blocks of huts, together with quarters for married non-commissioned officers. Each block forms two separate, lofty and commodious rooms, calculated on ordinary occasions to contain twenty-six men each; though, should circumstances necessitate it, more than double that number can be accommodated in each room, without the huts being so crowded as is often the case in our barracks. The site of the barracks is an elevated spot, close to the town of Gravesend, the soil on which it is placed being gravel, resting on chalk, and therefore promising to be exceedingly healthy. Although the buildings are denominated huts, little or no wood has been

used in their construction, the whole being substantially built of brick, and each room well lighted and ventilated. The floors are all damp-proof, and the most ample means have been taken to secure proper ventilation for each separate building. The barracks stand on about four acres of ground. At the end of the huts two large lecture-rooms have been built, to be used in the instruction of the officers and troops in the theoretical principles of rifle-firing, and other military subjects. The rifle range selected for the troops is at some distance from the barracks, in a secluded spot near the Thames. The land so acquired, however, is still in its original state, and much must be done to it before it can be adapted to its intended purpose. The barracks at Gravesend will be auxiliary to those at Chatham.

A volunteer camp is under consideration, to be purchased by national subscription, near Aldershott. It is intended as a permanent camp, and for the establishment of permanent rifle ranges, with suitable buildings at Wimbledon and Wanstead. A patriotic owner of land, contiguous to the military camp, offers a hundred acres on extremely favourable terms. There will be an ample range for rifle practice, for artillery exercise, and for bringing cavalry and artillery together, and instructing the various arms of the volunteer service to act in conjunction with regular troops. There is to be a spacious club-house, with separate sleeping accommodation, free of expense, for

as many as one thousand volunteers, with baths, library, and every other convenience, and butts at all ranges up to 1,200 yards. For "City" and professional men, there will be telegraphic wires laid on, communicating, gratis, with Cheapside and Regent Circus; and for volunteers from the country, the club-house at the camp will be a sensible boon as regards economy, comfort, and social as well as military advantages. The establishment of the permanent ranges at Wimbledon and Wanstead is a subsidiary part of the project, which seems well calculated to give cohesion and a central direction to the volunteer forces, and to operate as a sort of normal school for our "irregular" army.

MORAL CONDITION OF THE CAMP.

...."Aurelian expected that his soldiers should be modest, frugal, and laborious; that their armour should be constantly kept bright, their weapons sharp, their clothing and horses ready for immediate service; that they should live in their quarters with chastity and sobriety, without damaging the cornfields; without stealing even a sheep, a fowl, or a bunch of grapes; without exacting from their landlords either salt, or oil, or wood."—GIBBON.

As regards what the French term the "*moral*" of the troops, that has been no less carefully considered and amply provided for than the "*physique*," so much so, that although sequestrated for so long a time in the midst of a dull country, where the eye rests everywhere on dry and uncultivated plains, they never appeared to suffer from this unfavourable position.

The French soldier, generally speaking, prefers camp to garrison life. The martial associations with which he is surrounded are congenial to his tastes, and arouse his national instincts. This existence, notwithstanding its privations, its inconveniences, and its fatigues, is much more advantageous to him than barrack-life, for it represents the army to him as a large family, of which all the members are as it were responsible to each other.

That essential feeling of unity known as *esprit de corps*, and which, next to discipline, is the vital principle of an army, gains incalculably in the midst of this daily personal intercourse, of these grand field-days and exciting sham fights, and when the bugle sounds to charge, the soldier forgets his fatigue, to obey the electric impulse which animates him simultaneously with so many others.

The situation of the several regiments in the camp is, of course, considerably varied. Some are placed in the midst of thicket or forest-land, while others must needs take up with the level and barren plain, without shelter either against heat or rain; all, however, have made the best of their position, and have not only broken up the uncultivated soil, tilled, sown, and watered it in unpromising spots now converted into smiling corn-fields and well-stocked kitchen-gardens, but they have surrounded their huts, and, more surprising still, their tents, with glowing flower-borders and smooth lawns.

They have been wisely encouraged in these efforts by their officers; but, besides the small remuneration accorded to the industrious, in proportion to their labour, they take a great delight in the occupation, and find in the distraction it affords them a welcome remembrance of their peaceful village-homes.

These "field" labours, though of course on a comparatively small scale, have resulted in contributing to the salubrity of the air, and at the same time in

varying the exercise of the men by healthy toil. Dancing, chorus-singing, concerts, fencing, gymnastics, are likewise encouraged among the men, and one of their greatest delights consists in those joyous *réunions* of comrades around the bivouac fire, where, amidst the excitement of tales, jests, and songs, the men recover that genuine gaiety of old times which is one of the distinctive features of the French army.

If we would study the character of the French soldier, we could not find a more favourable spot than this for making ourselves acquainted with its simplicity, its elasticity, its ingenuity and endless resources. One of the most interesting portions of the camp is that allotted to the tents of the "32me de ligne," a regiment which has rendered itself famous not only on the field of glory, but in the pursuit of art. We spent a considerable time in visiting it in all its detail, and were well repaid. It is a complete museum of curiosities, and is, besides, valuable as a significant evidence of the genius and versatility of the French soldier. In the first place, the whole of their department has an appearance of comfort and neatness with which one would have thought it impossible to invest a village of tents. Each has its smooth white path round it, and neat turf border; then its garden, planted on one side with flowers, and on the other with vegetables, while the broad path towards which the entrance of the tent is turned, is smooth, hard, and we may say, spotless; but this is not all; besides being formed into fancifully-shaped

flower-borders, each little garden contains what may, under the circumstances, be termed a masterpiece of art, consisting of the miniature representation in chalk—sculptured with a precision, an accuracy, a degree of taste and neatness rarely equalled—of some real or imaginary building, with all its accessories. In one case it is a fortress, in which none of the detail has been forgotten—battlements, sentry-boxes, portcullis, drawbridge, moat, all are there, down to the guns and their piles of ammunition. In another, it is a lake surrounded by rock-work, on one side is a boat-house, with diminutive boats moored against the landing-place. Then, we have a model of the Bastille as it was, of the Malakoff tower, of the Arsenal at Vienna, of the Arc de Triomphe at Paris. Another has a fountain of elegant design, with eight jets of water, all playing into an elaborately constructed basin, the reservoir being fixed on a shelf in the top of the artist's tent! One has made a spiral staircase, another a citadel, and others again busts of the Emperor and Empress on handsome pedestals, all carved in chalk with an ordinary knife. One, desirous of complimenting the first Napoleon and his own regiment simultaneously, has carved a figure of the late Emperor, and on its pedestal this brief but dignified legend—"J'étais tranquille. Le 32me était là."

There is often a great deal of humour in these designs; among the rest we saw represented a portion

of the Crimean plain; in the foreground stands prominently forward a tombstone, "powdered," as heralds would say, with tears, and bearing the inscription, "Ci gît Fifine," doubtless the *chien du régiment*, left behind, alas! upon the field of battle.

A railway station, with a train starting, and by some clever contrivance the engine smoking, was among the best executed; the telegraph wires and every other detail were accurately represented. But one of the greatest triumphs of mechanical genius is a toy invented for the Prince Imperial, and composed of a numerous group of figures quaintly attired, and busily engaged in various occupations; the gravity of the countenances and attitudes adding not a little to the ludicrous aspect of the whole. The little stage represents a market-place; on one side is a house, the ground-floor window is open, and within is seen, seated at a desk, a lawyer, wearing a large wig, carefully examining a folio volume, his head moving up and down as he turns the pages with a knowing, self-sufficient air. On the corresponding side are two windows, at the lower of which two persons stand looking out, while at the upper a woman is emptying dirty water, which, of course, falls on their heads; in front of the house the market-place is busy with life and movement—a clown is making evolutions with a pole, and a gaping crowd is grouped around, admiring his feats; on a three-legged stool sits a woman grinding coffee, and behind her a man

sharpening a knife; further on, are two sawyers dividing the trunk of a tree, while a party of children are wheeling about in a merry-go-round. On a small platform are four or five couples waltzing, and down below is an old crippled sailor in the attitude of a man hard at work, laboriously turning a handle, which appears to set the whole in motion; his is decidedly the most ridiculous figure of all. In front are four small fliers, which, as the wind catches them, revolve, and form the real motive power. It is most amusing to observe the rapidity with which, according to the amount of wind, all the various operations proceed, slackening at others, without any visible cause, unless it be the fatigue of the showman, who appears to repose in the most natural attitude on his windlass, as if he were pausing to take breath.

His Majesty, having visited this part of the camp, was highly amused with this ingenious effort, and was pleased to accept it as a present to the young prince, according a sum of money and a few days' holiday in approval of the inventive powers of the soldier who had produced it. The one at present exhibited is the second edition.

Near this, is a cleverly designed helix in the form of a rising mound, the winding line which constitutes it represents a path, and is broad enough to bear an inscription stating the numbers of the regiments, and names of the principal officers now quartered in the camp. This could not have been constructed without

considerable mathematical knowledge, and gained a handsome reward from the Emperor.

There is also a minute and truly accurate model of the camp itself, affording a very clear idea of its extent, and the plan on which it is disposed. Every hut, every tent, and even every sentry-box, is said to have been represented by the artist, who has filled in all the detail with conscientious minuteness. The villages of Mourmelon le Grand et le Petit, of Bacône, their rustic cottages, market-places and churches, are effectively introduced.

It will doubtless be remembered by some of our readers that one of the regiments quartered at Helfaut in 1824 distinguished itself in a similar way.

At the camp of Sathonay the same spirit of vivacity and ingenious initiative might be traced; similarly humorous mottoes, similarly comical signand similar amusing groups modelled in clay, or sculptured in soft stone.

Neither was the expression of that piety which may be regarded as so frequent a characteristic of the French soldier, excluded from the spot; these curious and amusing details were not the only evidences that the French soldier had been at work there; and as if to sanctify these emblems of art, of glory, and of military life, the soldiers of the camp of Sathonay had constructed in rock-work the miniature representation of a pious pilgrimage under the invocation of Notre Dame du Fort. The traveller who journeys wearily

on the rugged path of life, now elevated on a lofty peak, now sunk in a deep ravine, was symbolized by a military figure advancing through numerous accidents and inequalities of ground, towards the resting-place pointed out to his faith, and marked on the summit of the ascent by a figure of the Blessed Virgin. This picturesque ideal was continually covered with fresh flowers, and surrounded with votive offerings.

The *Times* of the 11th of May last, stated that the soldiers were mustering rapidly for their "season" at Châlons. The writer described the camp as assuming daily a more animated appearance, and the regiments which were to form it, as they arrived each day, installed themselves in their tents, and the first care of the soldiers, after they had pitched them, was to ornament them by planting gardens in front. They formed streets through the camp, which intersect each other at right angles, and squares are planned wherever the position is favourable—"In fact," concludes the account, "the French soldier contrives to make himself at home in whatever situation he is placed."

The official opening of the camp took place on the 1st of June, and the force was much more considerable than on the preceding years.

The artillery, the "génie," the cavalry, and the 1st and 3rd divisions of infantry bivouacked under the tents, whilst almost the entire 2nd division were

barracked in the new "pavilions" near the village of Mourmelon. These constructions, built of brick, and covered with slate, already number 140, and are capable in the aggregate of lodging 7000 men and 200 officers.

The various approaches to the camp, as well as the roads intersecting it, have been planted with upwards of 2,500 trees of various descriptions, now in full foliage, and wonderfully favourable to the aspect of the spot. In consequence of orders given by the Emperor in the beginning of the year, parcels of ground intended for and planted as kitchen gardens have been organized behind the locale of each regiment of cavalry, as well as infantry; destined to contribute to the commissariat department, and to vary the ordinary of the men. To this effect detachments of fourteen gardeners from each regiment, under the conduct of a sergeant and a corporal, were sent, as long previously as in April last, to the camp, and over them was also appointed an officer (lieutenant or sub-lieutenant) to each brigade.

The engineers were employed to mark out the gardens behind the last line of the tents or huts. Each regiment was at once put in possession of its own piece of ground, and the men set to work upon it with all the vigour and interest inspired by emulation. Some portions of the land are more unfavourable to horticulture than others, and the spade occasionally failed to produce the required result. Here

the *génie* again came in to their assistance, and soon ploughed it into cultivation. The first operation was to sow cabbage seeds in large quantities, and some thousands of heads of these plants were given to each regiment.

Besides the advantage of thus obtaining vegetables for the rations, and flowers to perfume and embellish their huts, it has been found that the soldiers have derived great benefit, in a moral point of view, from this healthy and recreative occupation. Instead of spending their time and their savings in drink, they are attracted to their new employment by a feeling of laudable emulation to turn their allotted portion of land to the best account.

The Emperor, duly informed of these results, now purposes to establish schools of practical horticulture, to form and improve the garrisons of fortified towns.

This is an admirable idea. Every soldier drawn from an agricultural district, would, during his period of service, acquire many useful hints, and after that period was over, would return to his family possessing knowledge truly valuable in the pursuit of rural occupations, besides preserving a taste for labour, and habits of industry.

The notion is not, however, altogether original: Maréchal Bugeaud caused the troops in Algeria to execute magnificent works in the way of cultivation. If the authorities uniformly encouraged the men in thus employing their leisure, especially in localities

where the soil requires care and attention, what an extent of barren land might be brought into cultivation, and converted into rich and productive districts!

During a considerable portion of the month of July, the drill and other exercises were frequently interrupted by the rains which fell in great abundance, but every spare moment was turned to account by the men in embellishing the approaches of their temporary dwellings, and breaking the monotony of the straight lines formed by the tents, decorated with such plantings as we have described. The soil of the camp, tolerably ungrateful in its nature, has been turned over and over with exhaustless patience by the French *fantassins*, who have succeeded in drawing out of it more than any one would have supposed it could be made to produce. Some among them, indulging a passion for the picturesque, have started the happy idea of surrounding their modest dwellings with young pines transplanted from the nearest forest, which, however, is still at a considerable distance, but the effect fully repays the trouble. Among the trees forming a little grove round the tents we observed a singular incident; there was on one of the branches a magpie's nest, in which were ensconced three young birds, nestling there until fully fledged, under the special protection of the soldiers; they were subsequently tamed, and continued to be their pets.

The officers here not only take great interest in

the recreative pursuits of the men, but stimulate their efforts by every possible means, presiding day after day at the distribution of the produce of the regimental gardens.

At Aldershott, on the other hand, strange to say, it does not seem ever to have occurred to the authorities to suggest or to promote, even when desired by the men, any effort at useful industry, whether by seeking to improve the quality and description of their rations, or to enliven the dreary, black, barren, repulsive aspect of the camp by planting a single specimen of rurality, either in the form of vegetables for varying the insipid nature of the daily mess, or of plants, shrubs, and trees, which may contribute a little to break the monotony of the bare roads and streets, if not to ornament them. The difficulty is no greater here than at Châlons, where every obstacle has been so nobly surmounted; the soil is equally unpropitious in either locality.

It would seem fair to assume this as a matter in which we may judge of the moral propensities of the two nations—at all events of the two armies.

Athletic exercises have always formed an important portion of French drill, and their daily practice is an item in the recreation of the French soldier. It is now just dawning upon our Commander-in-Chief that this is no such bad idea, and it is in contemplation to introduce a course of gymnastic instruction as a part of military education;

gymnasia are now, for the first time, to be established at Chatham, Portsmouth, Woolwich, Sheerness, and other important military stations.

Of the consequence attached by the Romans to bodily exercise, we may judge from the fact of their army taking its name from the practice of feats of strength and agility: Varro, in his treatise "De Linguâ Latina," points out the derivation of "Exercitus" ab exercitando. In time of peace they exercised with arms twice the weight of those used in actual warfare.

The abundant supplies of seed of all kinds, including radishes, lettuces, carrots, turnips, beans, peas, celery; &c., sent from Paris to form the groundwork of the camp kitchen-garden, have sprung up with a success most gratifying to the originators of the scheme; in this, the first year, the vegetables produced by the labour of the men alone, were found to suffice for all the wants of the troops. The growing crops now standing in the garden of each regiment are estimated at from 12,000 to 13,000 cabbage plants, 8,000 to 9,000 heads of leeks, and as many onions of the finest growth. Besides these, there is an abundance of haricot beans and other vegetables, and the forward state of this new project promises an ample reward in every respect.

Wells and pumps for the irrigation of these gardens have been provided, and the water is pure and

unlimited in quantity. Next year the produce will, of course, be proportionably better, because the land will have had more time for being manured, and will be in better condition. As each regiment piques itself on its success, we may soon expect to see competitory exhibitions, and to hear of prize cabbages and turnips in the camp. The French soldier, as a rule, is fond of agricultural pursuits, and as all those who are drawn from the provinces are more or less attached to their rural homes, they delight in an occupation to which, besides the impulse of their natural taste and aptitude, they are attracted by the fond ties of association, and the memory of the village common or the paternal field.

Amusement, and all that can promote cheerfulness and good-humour among the soldiers, has always formed a feature in the administration of military matters in France, and diversions have generally been contrived even under the greatest difficulties.

"Whilst General Changarnier was passing his days and nights hard at work," says an *Officier de la guerre d'Afrique*, "we were installed in a room in the *palace* of Milianah. The 'palace' consisted of three rooms—one was reserved for the General, another for an eating-room, and in the third we bivouacked pell-mell in company with rats and mice. In the day time we frequented the club of the officers, a delightful little *pavillon* built in the middle of the garden. A streamlet flowing through the flower-

borders seemed to impart a coolness to these shady paths. Close to the club was the 'café,' and not far from them, a library well stored with new and entertaining works. A committee chosen from among the officers of the garrison, and presided over by the Commander himself, supervised the establishment. Thus in the stations of Africa, as on board ship during a prolonged voyage, all is provided that can relieve the tedium of a position offering in itself so little attraction.

"In the evening, occasionally, we had a dramatic performance—a play at Milianah! The combination certainly sounds somewhat incongruous, but upon my word, it was not so bad, and if the mirth it produced is any proof of its excellence, I may say we enjoyed those evenings heartily. The whole living population on either side the curtain consisted of soldiers—they took it in turns to be actors and spectators. Each had his part. A corporal played the love-sick damsel, a grenadier the 'noble father,' a voltigeur the 'chamber-maid.' The Vivandières made up the caps and gowns. I remember once seeing them perform '*Le Caporal et sa Päyse*;' the effect was ludicrous in the extreme. The Déjazet of the company was irresistible, and in the character of Artemise provoked the hilarity of the whole audience; no one, perhaps, enjoyed it more thoroughly than our excellent General, who sat in a state-box got up in the most 'impossible'

style. It will hardly be believed how immensely these entertainments contributed to keep up the spirits of the soldiers. Those who have not experienced the depressing effects of circumstances and of climate, under which we laboured, may treat such amusements as puerilities, but there is no doubt that without them many would have sunk under that strange and sad malady so fatal to our men in foreign climes—nostalgia."

There are points in the two camps which it is interesting to compare, whether as regards the military organization, or the more general characteristics of the two nations. Thus each camp has, of course, given a start to commercial and speculative activity in its respective neighbourhood, and the results are very observable in both cases.

The town of Aldershott has, within the last year, assumed an extent and importance for which we were hardly prepared. Buildings have arisen and are rising on all sides, and according to the invariable laws of supply and demand so well understood in this money-making country, numerous and various are the establishments which have located themselves there to supply the requirements of Camp-life.

As at the Camp of Mourmelon, no sooner was the army stationed there, than appeared a horde of small dealers seeking to make a living out of the earnings of the *soldat;* just in the same manner a multitude of "*petites industries*" came swarming

round the new camp at Aldershott, bringing every possible temptation that could entice the red-coats to amuse and enjoy themselves within their precincts. This was a very good beginning, but too slow for the progressive ideas and shrewd calculations of John Bull, who had no notion of standing still *en si beau chemin*. Finding their custom increase, with every prospect of continued success, the stall-keepers began to think they might safely become shop-keepers, that more roomy quarters would produce larger profits, that it would certainly pay to establish themselves in a more substantial form, and they accordingly set to work on their new speculation; thus, within an incredibly short space of time sprung up the busy, handsome, and attractive streets we now see, with their billiard-tables, photographic chambers, music-halls, public-houses, and sectarian meeting places; in short, the experiment, tried on a small and inexpensive scale, was found to be a lucrative one, and the place has now acquired the proportions and attributes of a thriving market town. Other trades of a more matter-of-fact and less precarious character have contributed no unimportant quota to the formation of the new colony, which has of course become the ordinary emporium of the Camp in general, and the continual resort of the pleasure-seeking soldier in particular. The booths which first drew him from his cheerless tent and noisy hut, are now well-lighted, well-

warmed buildings, decorated with all the ornamentation that can please the eye—supplied with all that can delight the senses, and where, for a comparatively small sum, he may pass away his evenings in the enjoyment of beer and tobacco, accompanied by songs and jokes of a calibre which *he* can admire, though *we* might fail to appreciate.

Of the class of "characters" that such a place must bring to the vicinity of the camp, we had better not say too much. It is not difficult to guess at what, after all, must be the natural result of such a combination in the present age and state of society. We can only affirm that, as regards the associates they necessarily pick up, they are by no means exclusive, and the readiness with which they frequent the town after dark, proves them, on the contrary, exceedingly liberally-minded in this particular.

The village of Mourmelon le Grand may be considered a *dépendance* of the camp; it stands very prettily embowered in trees, and the primitive market-place, moss-grown spire, and antique tenements which compose it, add so many picturesque incidents to the general aspect of the locality; the road from the entrance of the camp to the centre of the village presents the appearance of a country fair, the fact that the camp is there, having brought from all directions enterprizing little capitalists; all, if with small means, at least with every wish to improve the opportunity they hope to have found, by estab-

lishing themselves upon the spot, and embarking in a promising speculation. Buildings have therefore been hastily run up by means of the white unbaked bricks of the country, and as they are only required to stand the weight of one storey, they may probably last as long as the patience of their occupants, who will not perhaps make their fortune as rapidly as they expect, seeing that the season of their harvest takes in but one third of the year.

Among these "*petites industries*" we find that the tastes and habits of the soldier have been considered and adopted. There are Cafés-chantants, Salles de Concert, Bals, Billiards, Guinguettes, Salles Photographiques, Tirs au Pistolet, Jeux de Quilles, and various games of chance, fruit and tobacco stalls, and a very small sprinkling of stationers and news-shops. All this creates considerable liveliness and bustle, and it is hardly credible to what an extent the street is crowded at and after dusk with strolling parties of soldiers jostling each other as they circulate to and fro in this new suburb, which they may well look upon as their own, seeing it owes its existence entirely to their presence.

It was amusing, one Sunday morning, to see a party of closely-cropped recruits pouring into the little glass-house of the photographer to get their raw visages transferred to paper for the edification of their *païses*, to whom, doubtless, these interesting mementos were to be transmitted; but still more

entertaining was it when they came out, each with his image as it had been transferred to paper, to observe the dismay with which they surveyed the result of the sitting. The unlucky photographer of course came in for a large share of abuse, and the originals —for very *original* were some of their physiognomies —seemed in most cases to consider it the best policy to pocket the affront and the likeness together.

Others, not so prudent, exhibited their presentation and communicated their grievances to their fellow-sufferers in language at once naïf and ludicrous:— "Mais vois-y donc un peu, les tout pétits yeux qu'y m'a faits là! A-t-on jamais vu! Va grr . . edin que tu es," muttered the enraged man of war, doubling his fist and shaking it at the artist in the glass house, "qui m'a fait payer çà mes dix sous, qui me restaient."

"C'est vrai, camerade; c'est une infamie — et moi donc? c'est-il pas vrai que je ne suis pas un Chinois comme ça?" and he held up a ludicrous reproduction of his own person. "Comment voulez-vous que j'envoie ça à ma payse?"

"Tiens! je trouve pas ça moi . . . Voilà cependant qui te ressemble bien. Ah, oui, c'est bien toi . . . de la tête aux pieds," remarked another, examining it, and a broad grin gradually overspread his countenance as he passed the various points of his friend's *individu* in review. "C'est étonnant comme il t'a saisi, cet *artisse!*"

"Tu crois?" answered the first speaker, half converted to a better opinion of his portrait; but a second look at the caricature seemed to disgust him more than the first. "Mais non! c'est que tu plaisantes. Ah! par exemple, mon cher, et tu veux que je sois comme ça, moi! Ah! quel horreur! Non jamais je n'en conviendrai: c'est un ignorant, c'est un charlatan, que ce farceur là; il ne connait pas le premier mot de son métier; et quant à toi, t'es un niais, et je ne reconnais qu'une faute à ta ressemblance, c'est qu'il ne t'a pas donné-zun air assez bête."

A *voiturier*, among other speculators, has established himself in this new village, and finds a considerable gain is to be derived from letting out his cumbrous, primitive-looking vehicles, some of which look like small houses on wheels, with a door behind, and large *croisées* at the sides, benches which lift up in order that you may get in and break your legs as you let them down again, and plenty of straw in the bottom; others with a cabriolet behind, and an open seat before it, beside which is the driver's perch, but to remain seated on this demands a considerable knowledge of the laws of equilibrium; —a third description resembles an Irish jaunting car, and is perhaps the best of all these queer machines; all have an antediluvian aspect about them, which almost inspires one with interest and curiosity as to their antecedents, for it is difficult to conceive the

reasons for their shape and construction, and one entertains a harmless but irrepressible longing to make acquaintance with the interior of the man's head who designed them.

There is not one of these uncouth objects that would not make as legitimate a subject for a chapter, as Sterne's "désobligeant," and we wished he had been here to physiologize it.

To give locomotion to their cumbrous proportions, the stable-keeper has engaged the services of all the superannuated war-horses he can buy up, and in this degrading occupation are the noble *déclassés* doomed to pass their last years. To such vile uses may they come at last!

As regards amusements, besides those we have enumerated as the ingenious efforts of private speculation, there is an authorized Tivoli, or tea-gardens, which is altogether a Government affair, provided and maintained at the expense of the Emperor, expressly for the *délassement* of the soldiers, and intended to attract them away from the others, which are, of course, on a different footing. A certain number of tickets are issued each day, so that the men of each regiment attend the Imperial soirées in their turn. A certain number of officers always attend with their men, and while their presence serves as a due and sufficient restraint, and safeguard against any breach of propriety, there is no restriction upon merriment of an allowable kind,

and the men enjoy the games, the dancing, the quiet chat over their little tables, or the dramatic representation provided for them, as thoroughly as if they were simply among themselves.

The Gardens have been placed in a convenient hollow, reached by a flight of steps, and illuminated after dark by coloured lamps. They are planted with fine old spreading chestnut trees, beneath which is reserved a place for dancing, and around are fixed small tables and benches. On one side is the *Théâtre des Zouaves*, and opposite this, the *buvette* or *cantine*, where coffee, wine, and liqueurs, ices, soda-water, lemonade, and beer, are served at prices regulated by a printed tariff.

There is no doubt that the army is everything in the eyes of the French Emperor. It is his pet institution, and the men collectively are his spoiled children. We lookers-on perceive it in a thousand little attentions, in which he humours them as a father indulges the inclinations, perhaps even the caprices, of his little ones. Neither are these trifling acts of consideration and solicitude by any means thrown away; they are all felt and appreciated by those who are the object of them. Whenever there is a *fête*, a military display, an exhibition of feats of arms, or of fireworks, such, for instance, as take place on the Champ de Mars on the Emperor's *fête*, *Messieurs les soldats* are the first to be considered. Other spectators may risk the chance of a showery sprinkle,

or a scorching sun, with the certainty of being covered with dust; but these gentlemen are *à l'abri* of such casualties, and when you ask invidiously for one of those tempting seats in the "grand stand" you see erected before you, you must content yourself with the answer that *that* is intended for the accommodation of the *soldats*. It is as exclusive as the grass at Trinity, the "*parquet militaire*" at the French theatres, or as the slopes of Walmer.* Whenever soldiers choose to travel, they are charged half price, whether by rail, by road, or even (on the stones) by omnibus, and all exhibitions are open to them on similar terms.

We observed that lately at the camp, His Imperial Majesty, wishing "to do the soldiers a pleasure," gave a military *fête* at Châlons, where, after a dramatic performance, which proved a complete ovation for them, a ball followed, so composed that ladies of rank and distinction joined in the dance

* Perhaps the anecdote which first made public this fact of *their* privacy, is known to some of our readers: we insert it in a note for the edification of the rest. It is related of an English *episcopa*, her husband being the Bishop of ——, that having, one day, unconsciously trespassed on this consecrated ground, "Ma'am," called out the sentinel respectfully, "you mayn't walk there." "Fellow!" was the indignant reply, "do you know to whom you are speaking? I am the Bishop of ——'s lady." "Can't help it, ma'am; if you were the Bishop's *wife*, you couldn't go there—nobody walks on the slopes but his Grace's *cow*."

with common soldiers, among whom, not only the superior officers, but also the Emperor himself, mingled on a footing of perfect equality.

There is a theatre at Aldershott, that is to say, in the new town which is springing up in the neighbourhood of the camp; but the performance is spiritless and unattractive, and the acting and répertoire being of the most inferior quality, the attendance is listless and numerically small. There are also music halls and dancing saloons, but they are of the usual calibre, and by no means answer the same purpose as similar amusements on the continent. On the contrary, so far from tending to elevate the *morale* of the camp, they mainly contribute to debase and degrade it. The singing is bad, the selection of music offered, in the worst possible taste; the orchestra incapable; and it is on beer, spirits, tobacco, and bad company, that the proprietors rely for their support;—the very evils from which the refining influence of music is destined to wean the men! The late complaints we have read in the *Times* and elsewhere of the social position of the camp, will have prepared us to learn that these resorts are mere *rendezvous* for persons of lost reputation and abandoned life.

There are private theatricals, in which the officers occasionally take part; but this is a casual and partial recreation, and neither calculated nor intended to form one of the diversions of the army generally. Indeed, there is no doubt but that at Aldershott, re-

laxation has been too much overlooked, and hence the low tone of the whole camp, and the deplorable nature of their pastimes.

Totally different are the tendencies and pursuits of the French *troupier;* mischievous, reckless, even desperate he may be, in carrying out a determination: "*A la guerre comme à la guerre*" is his motto, and there may be certain tricks he will remorselessly play upon a fresh and uninitiated comrade, which we might characterise as barbarous and cruel; but we affirm that he lacks the grovelling tastes and animal propensities of the English soldier; with him drunkenness is the exception and not the rule, and as he is generally a son of toil, has followed some occupation before entering the army, and has thus, or under the instruction of the *Frères,* acquired some little artistic knowledge or mechanical skill, his mind and his fingers are both used, and inclined, to activity. We shall therefore frequently find him devoting every spare moment to the completion of some ingenious piece of work he has imagined and taken in hand, or in perfecting himself in some accomplishment or employment which will be of use to him when he returns to his Penates. He will practise playing on some instrument, or teach himself to write, or to draw, or study mechanics, or he will plant, or build, or decorate his quarters by some clever device drawn from his fertile brain.

To men thus eager for occupation, and also not

inimical to amusement, the stage presented a rich resource; the men suggested and carried out various improvements in the scenery and lighting, in the *mise en scène* and stage-effects; and as to the Zouaves, who seem to be very devils incarnate, and to be able to do anything they please, when once they tried their talents at acting, the result was a triumphant success. All classes and denominations, civil as well as military, shouted their approbation, and royalty itself was pleased to signify its enjoyment. The Empress is said to have been intensely amused by the novel and unique performances of these versatile geniuses, to whom nothing comes amiss. Male and female characters fell alike to their lot, and the *dramatis personæ* were disguised, costumed, and placed on the stage with so much art, that the cheat was not to be detected by the sharpest gimlet-eye. Neither did the deception stop here; voice, step, gait, attitude, and even peculiarities, were reproduced with an appreciation so keen, that the perfectly natural manner with which these characteristic attributes were assumed, would have done credit to the most finished actor. There was a total absence of caricature or exaggeration, and the delusion was as perfect as the acting.

The complexion of these sunburnt sons of the south was concealed by some mysterious process; their bold, daring expression was laid aside, and their features, softened with an art which defied de-

tection, appeared perfectly in character with the slight, agile and supple figure they assumed, while the compression of their powerful hands into a delicate *gant glacé*, and of their feet and ankles into the neat *chaussure* of a *Marquise du faubourg*, or a Parisian *grisette*, can only be comprehended by a master in the art of *travestissement*.

The art which had succeeded in placing before the spectators the dimpled shoulders, delicate waist, and pouting movements of a graceful girl of sixteen, fresh from her *pension*, is thoroughly appreciated when, in the midst of the last scene of the piece, a startling sound of fire-arms is heard without, the scenery falls, a sentry rushes in to announce the approach of the enemy, who has availed himself of the opportunity to prepare an ambuscade. The drums beat, the trumpets sound to arms, but though the attack is surreptitious, the defence is instantaneous. At the back of the stage, as if by magic, appears a detachment of the allied troops. The Zouaves catch up their arms, and joining them, advance upon the foe: the "ladies" tuck up their muslin flounces, for they have not time to remove them, and the boarding-school miss, shouldering her piece, gives the word of command in loud, sonorous tones, and is the first to fire. This was the representation of an incident which actually took place during a performance in the Crimea.

The Zouaves, on their return from the East,

passing through the capital of Prussia, offered to give a representation for the benefit of the Catholic Hospital of that city. Their charity, however, was not limited to this one locality; they signalized their passage through all the towns on their line of march possessing an hospital directed by Sisters of Mercy, by a similar gift of their talents and services.

On one occasion the officers and sub-officers of the 11th Dragoons got up, at Vendôme, two performances, which were attended with the greatest success. The proceeds, which were for the poor, amounted to six hundred francs, the theatre having been lent them for the purpose of carrying out their benevolent intentions.

At Douai, in September last, the 10th Battalion of Foot Chasseurs, in garrison there, gave a representation for the benefit of the Christians in the East, which produced 1076 francs.

The history of the camp-theatre is as follows. In 1857, the Grenadiers de la Garde, following the example of the Zouaves, gave dramatic entertainments in the open air. In 1858, the manager of the theatre at Châlons petitioned the *Ministre de la Guerre* for an authorization to construct a theatre at the camp. But the regulations of the camp interdicting the use either of iron or lime, he was forced to content himself with an altogether primitive construction. His theatre, if theatre it could be called, was open on all sides, had no galleries, and the public

was not accommodated with seats. The receipts, as may be supposed, were not very magnificent. Jokes and *bon mots* and ludicrous scenes are amusing enough when you can "stand at ease" to enjoy them; but they come with very different effect when the audience, already fatigued and requiring repose, must remain in a wearying position, and cannot even listen without an effort.

The Emperor, to compensate the loss the director must otherwise sustain, and to encourage his good intentions, ordered him a monthly subsidy of 2,000 francs, on condition that 6,400 admissions should be gratuitously accorded in the course of the month to soldiers of all ranks. Besides this, at the breaking up of the camp, a benefit was allowed, at which were present the Emperor, the Empress, and all the military staff. This assistance was of some service, but it scarcely sufficed. The manager, emboldened by the reception his efforts had met, resolved to go further still; he had a theatre constructed in wood —a real theatre, with all its detail of appliances and machinery—a stage of handsome dimensions, suitable decorations and scenery, costumes, chandeliers—a stage-box for the Emperor, boxes for the Commander-in-Chief, Generals, and other officers.

The manager thus made a step in advance. The Emperor would not be outdone, and met him by making two. He reflected that 6,400 admissions a month were but few among so many men, and he

therefore accorded an increased monthly sum, desiring a reserve of 54,000 admissions each month for the men, and gratuitous entrance for the officers at all times.

Thus all the soldiers are in turn conducted to the theatre by their officers in divisions; and of all the *corvées* imposed upon them by their condition as soldiers, it is perhaps that to which they object the least.

The performances are varied in character, and consist of operettes, vaudevilles, and comedies; but it is the light, humorous style which has the greatest charm for the soldier; it serves to amuse him, and to enliven the monotony of his daily round of duties and exercises. The pieces are often wonderfully well got up, and the scenery is sometimes very elaborate. We have seen the stage beautifully illuminated, with coloured lamps disposed among trees and flowers, amidst which appeared a fountain of tasteful design, which continued playing throughout the scene.

The Emperor delights in attending the performances, and in conducting thither any visitors at the Imperial Pavilion, but more especially on those occasions when the soldiers perform.

The Zouaves have not been in the camp since the first year; but the regular troops, like all Frenchmen, possess considerable dramatic talents, and often unite their efforts with those of the company.

Those whose turn permits them to visit the Tivoli are only expected to return to their quarters when the performance is concluded, the rest are required to be within the fold by half-past eight o'clock, when the *appel* is sounded.

There may be more reasons than one for the withdrawal of the Zouaves; it would seem they were rather too much for the—possibly honest and simple, but certainly not over-brilliant—Champenois, whom they plundered right and left. There was scarcely a farm-yard or an orchard which did not experience the effects of their predatory propensities. Nothing was safe so long as they were in the camp—eggs, poultry, lambs, disappeared as if by magic—and on one occasion they even contrived to abstract a pig, without being overheard! The paysans were dumbfoundered, and if you asked a farmer how his property went, he could only reply, scratching his head and shrugging his shoulders, with a thoroughly puzzled air, "Ah ma foi! ces Zouaves, voyez vous, c'est le——Diable."

These "Diablotins" once went so far as to rob one of the Emperor's farms on the plains of Châlons, and doubtless His Majesty was less displeased at the want of vigilance on the part of the sentinels, than amused and gratified at the fact that his Zouaves knew how to maintain their reputation for address and spirit.

On another occasion they succeeded in making

away with a barrel of wine which stood with a number of others in the market-place at the busiest time of day, and while the Mayor himself was present. They began by rolling it about as if they were amusing themselves with it, and this they did so cleverly that those who saw them, taking it for an empty cask, left them unmolested; thus they got their prize further and further away, until by degrees it was fairly out of sight, after which it was easily concealed and readily disposed of.

In these and a countless number of similar delinquencies, they not only most completely carried out their design, but managed matters so efficiently, that it was impossible to detect the offenders. Several were apprehended on suspicion, but their plans were cleverly laid, and their precautions well taken, so that nothing could be proved against them. There was no chance of their betraying one another, and as no one else was in their secret, there remained no alternative but to release the captives after a few days' detention, during which it was found impossible to establish the charge. Once released, they returned to their predatory exploits, and at length the victims felt there was nought but to submit.

All this is, however, so notoriously a part of the Zouave's dauntless and daring character, that the very peasants, while they complained of their losses, were amused and amazed by the audacity no less than the dexterity of their despoilers, and thought,

perhaps, that, in consideration of public gratitude, they ought to sink their private grudge. In recounting the detail of their losses they speak of their depredators in an exculpatory tone, which betrays more surprise at their cleverness and daring, than ill-feeling at their impudence and roguery, for they know it to be in keeping with the attributes of their desperate and impetuous nature. In fact, without their audacity they would not *be* Zouaves.

"Ah! allez, ce sont de fameux coquins que ces gueux de 'zou-zous:' ils ne vous laisseraient pas seulement la peau sur les os," says the plundered farmer, for he justly attributes his losses to a pardonable spirit of adventure on the part of his depredators, who would not pass by an opportunity of exercising their ingenuity, lest their right hand should forget its cunning.

Of all the camps which have as yet been attempted in France, that of Sathonay is decidedly the one laying the best claim to picturesqueness of effect. Numerically speaking, it was perhaps the smallest, for it accommodated scarcely 4,000 men. Let us inspect it; two roads lead thither, one by the Croix-Rousse, the other through Fontaine; the former is shorter, but more rugged, the latter longer but more pleasing. It leads us through a panorama varied by the justly famed banks of the Saône, the tower of the "belle Allemande," the Island of Barbe, so dear to the Lyonnèse, the delicious villas which overlook the river,

a flying bridge, and then Fontaine. Our conveyance stops at the entrance of a narrow, shady path, poetically called "The Desert." We may venture into its intricacies without apprehension, for it resembles in no respect that of Sahara; the road which crosses it, winds between two balmy hedges of eglantines and hazels, and is delightfully sheltered from the sun, whose bright light gleams here and there across it, through the green foliage. Of animal life, the specimen we most frequently meet is the emerald grasshopper, uttering its little merry cry as it hops from blade to blade, or the gay butterfly caressing with painted wing the calyx of a flower.

We walk on, fascinated by the simple beauty of the objects which surround us, and are startled by a voice which seems almost out of place in the midst of nature's choicest handiwork. "Qui vive!" it says, and, recalled to actuality, we reply, "Amis." We have unconsciously arrived at the advanced posts. The appeal of the sentinel announces this fact, for there are no huts to serve as a faubourg to the main body of the camp. We pass an extemporized street of *guinguettes, cafés, salles de billard, restaurants,* and fruit shops, and we reach the brow of a gentle hill which commands the camp; there we obtain a magnificent coup-d'œil. Nothing, indeed, can be more picturesque than those long lines of tents symmetrically arranged on the rich plain bounded by an horizon of distant hills. When the

day closes in, and the pale rays of the moon soften the outlines of all terrestrial objects, one might think them white phantoms crouching on the grass, or Benedictine monks reposing on their future graves.

That isolated tent which first seizes our attention is that of the illustrious Maréchal to whose valiant arm France has entrusted the safety of the second of her cities. It is formed of two marquees placed back to back; the circumference adorned by a gallery formed of striped tent cloth, and supported by lances. One of these marquees has a history of its own: it had the honour of sheltering Maréchal Bugeaud in Africa, and from its summit the flag of France served as a guiding-star to the conquerors of Isly. Beyond, a peristyle, contrasting its massive appearance with the lightness of the canvas dwellings, and forming a colonnade, is constructed of field-pieces, whose bases repose within the gaping orifices of howitzers, and whose capitals are crowned with inverted pistols. From one column to another, serpents formed of various weapons elegantly display their scales, and serve to frame the Maréchal's motto, "Plus d'honneur que d'honneurs." The second marquee, surmounted by an eagle similarly composed, serves as dining-hall to the Maréchal de Castellan, and therein are often assembled guests chosen from the élite of Lyons society.

The two tents next in importance are those of Generals Herbillon and Deshorties; then comes the

library formed by the aumônier, and beyond a tent which we must call the "*Presbytère.*" Close to this modest vicarage, and on the culminating point of the eminence, stands the altar. During the week it is denuded, and seems to want its velvet hangings, and garlands of flowers, and graceful decorations with which the brilliant fancy of the French soldier is so successful in adorning it on the weekly festival. On those occasions the steps of the sacred structure, which recalls to the soldiers through the day the remembrance of Heaven, are reverently carpeted. The periphery of the altar, flanked by two howitzers of the 26th, is fenced by a trellis of cavalry swords crossed, with their scabbards. Two graceful columns, whose height is broken at close and regular intervals, by wreaths of swords, guns, and pistols, support the canopy.

We will proceed to the most characteristic and most frequented portion of the camp, "*L'Allée des Cuisines.*"

In the first line the *fourneaux*, constructed by the *génie*, strike the eye; that art which, so to speak, called them into being out of a lump of clay, has done its work independently of fancy, and follows with mathematical fidelity the principles of science—they are cooking stoves, and nothing more. This can by no means be said of the buildings which stand hard by. Imagination seems to have thrown off all restraint, and to have evoked from the ex-

haustless regions of fancy, a creation of its own. Here, have sprung up, as if by enchantment, domes, pyramids, obelisks; there, temples, minarets, towers; on this side fortresses, with embattlements and crenelles, gates and portcullises, moats and drawbridges. Further on, we have another flight of art in statues and busts, portraying their originals with so much exactitude, that names would be superfluous, or miniature master-pieces representing a Bacchus, a Syren, a Satyr, panoplies, and trophies; in short, a most interesting exhibition.

The proverb says that "good wine needs no bush," not so the constructors of the *cuisines*. Each one has its sign and its motto, more or less humorously imagined, all seasoned up to true military taste. Among a variety we noted the following:—

A la fortune du Pô (pot).

Anglicè "pot luck," but also alluding to the fortunes of the French arms in Italy.

Over one, we read, "*La cuisine est un temple, dont le fourneau est l'autel.*"

Another has a carrot for its sign, and for the legend, "*A la carotte* supérieure: bon vin, bonne bière de Mars.*"

Over a fourth we see—

"*Au Gastronôme.*

N.B.—*Un plat au choix, sur un menu composé de carottes.*"

* Carotte, in camp *argot*, signifies a practical joke.

A fifth adopts a "proverbe travesti"—

"*Il ne faut croire que la moitié de ce qu'on dine.*"

Or—

"*Il faut vivre pour manger, a dit un grand philosophe.*"

A very attractive building is illustrated by a showy sign-board, on which is painted a huge golden lion. Beneath his fierce majesty of the forest, somewhat questionably represented, we read—

"*Au lion d'or couché par terre,*

otherwise,

Au lit, on dort couché par terre,"

so that if any guest intends asking hospitality for the night, he is warned—by a bull, it is true—what sort of sleeping he may expect.

But besides the humour which enters so largely into the composition of the French soldier's character, we find a *côté sérieux,* and after a hearty laugh over these and many other evidences of his sense of the droll, we follow an enticing path ornamented with rock-work, and arrive at a pretty and ingenious grotto, which we find forms a pilgrimage, and is dedicated, as that at Châlons, to Notre Dame du Fort. A statue of the Blessed Virgin, enshrined there amid moss and shells, is always crowned with garlands of fresh flowers, and traces of frequent visits are evident in the well-trodden path which leads to it.

A letter from Kab-Elias, dated the beginning of April, gives an interesting account of the camp of

the expeditionary corps in Syria. "It is situated at the foot of an enormous rock, against which are erected stables for the horses; next come the tents and kitchens of the cavalry, and near them the artillery and the waggon train. The infantry occupies three sides of the square, and the rock the fourth. The soldiers' tents form the outer line on the three sides, and inside are the officers' tents. In the centre is the officers' club-house, also used as a theatre. There are also large tents where the engineers, the Staff, and the non-commissioned officers meet. The kitchens for the troops are outside the outer line of tents. The streets of the camp are made with stone and river sand, to prevent dirt, and have gutters to carry off the water; there is also a wide road all round the canvas dwellings.

"On Sundays the camp-altar is decorated and draped, and all the troops attend the celebration of mass. The soldiers amuse their leisure hours with various games of skill, fencing, boxing, &c., and in the evening there is a theatrical entertainment, got up among the men. The camp is separated from the village of Kab-Elias by a torrent, over which the engineers have thrown a bridge, and the nearest houses are used as magazines for stores. The hospital is established in a ruined fort, to which a road has been made from the camp. A road twelve kilomètres in length (about seven and a half miles) has also been made to join that to

Damascus. The health of the troops is excellent, notwithstanding the severity of the weather, snow having fallen during the winter to the depth of half a metre."

In touching upon the several incidents which vary the ordinary routine of camp-life, and especially of those contributing to elevate its tendencies, we no not mean to omit, but reserve for another chapter, that first and most important of all—important because it is the public recognition of an essential principle, the grand weekly ceremonial which gives an interest and a brilliancy to each returning Sunday morning.

At this solemn moment, the assembled thousands, albeit equipped for war, listening in awed and reverent silence to the holy message of peace, and bowing to receive the divine benediction, acknowledge the presence of the Lord to be no less vouchsafed amid the busy stir of armed forces than within the silent retreat of the village church.

END OF VOL. II.

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